



No. 534.—VOL. XLII.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 1903.

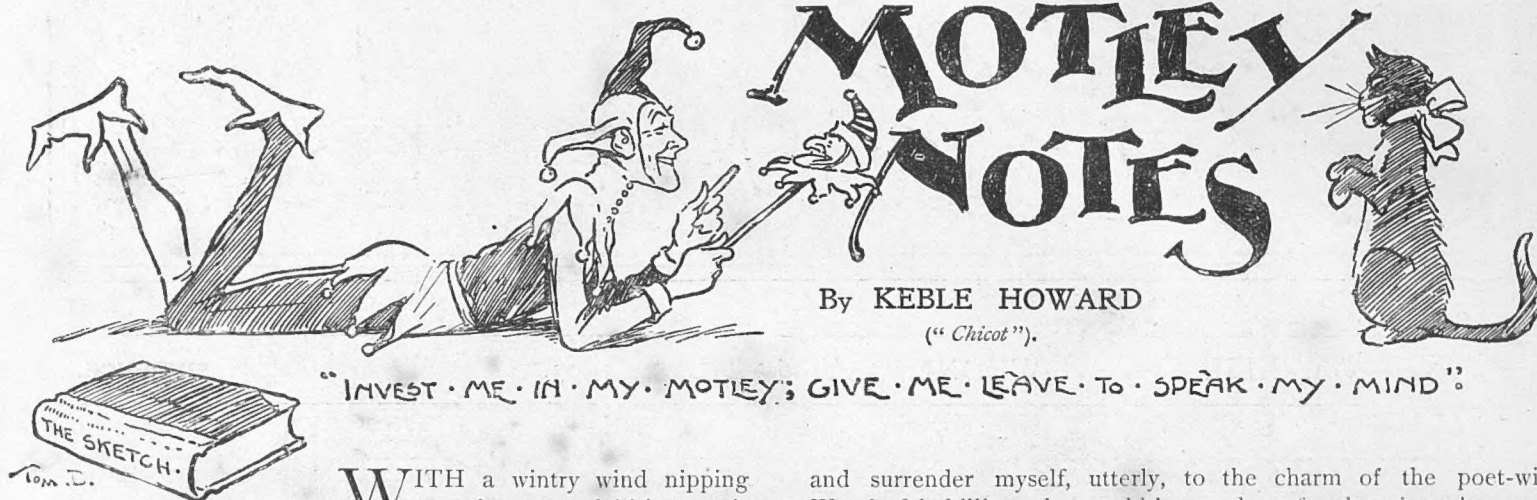
SIXPENCE.



MR. CYRIL MAUDE AS LORD OGLEBY IN "THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE,"

AT THE HAYMARKET.

Photograph by Bassano, Old Bond Street, W. (See also Pages 23-26.)



WITH a wintry wind nipping one's toes and biting one's fingers, it is a little difficult to shake one's bells in true April fashion and talk lightly of love and daffodils. And yet, if the fashionable journals speak truth, all the world is marrying and being given in marriage. For my part, I should be loth to take the plunge with the thermometer below freezing-point. Had my marriage been arranged to take place in the present week of grace, I feel sure that I should have made some excuse for getting it postponed. It is just possible, of course, that I should do that whatever the state of the weather, for the professional Jester, you know, is ever unlucky in love. I suppose it is because his lady expects him to be quaint out of business hours, and the poor Fool, naturally enough, objects to working overtime from the altar to the grave. As for the unprofessional Jester, that is quite another matter. Such an one jests out of mere lightness of heart. Life, Death, and Love are all vast jokes in the eyes of the amateur Fool. He cares not a jot for any one of them, and so it befalls that he enjoys the first, avoids the second, and treats the third well or ill according to his mood. Lucky the Jester who wears neither cap nor bells.

King Sol, by the way, has nothing whatever to do with the success of a marriage ceremony when the bridegroom is the son of a multi-millionaire. For what churl, I ask you, could mourn a lack of commonplace sunshine whilst his nose was sniffing up the odour of ten thousand choice blossoms, whilst his eyes were dazzled by an array of priceless diamonds, whilst his brain was reeling at the thought of room on room filled with gold, silver, and crystal bowls, paintings, statuary, clocks, and lamps? King Sol, forsooth! Small wonder that the shy old fellow failed to put in an appearance at the wedding of Miss Kathleen Gebhard Neilson and Mr. Reginald Claypoole Vanderbilt. It is with feelings of relief, too, that I read of the brevity of the religious service. Old-fashioned English matrons, mayhap, will hold up their hands in pious horror when they hear of that. Their thoughts will go back to their own weddings, and they will remember how sweetly solemn was the occasion and how earnestly they prayed for Divine guidance along the tangled path of married life. Well, well! That sort of sentimental recollection is all very well for you, my dear Madam, as you bend over your lavender-scented sheets or tend the simple flowers that grow beneath the old south wall of your English garden. Kindly understand, however, that it is far otherwise in the case of a girl who weds a mountain of shining dollars.

At this time of the year, more than at any other, my thoughts turn to the gentle hills and dales of the county that I know best, for to-morrow is the anniversary of the birth of William Shakspeare, and Stratford-upon-Avon is thronged with visitors from all parts of the world.

'Gainst death and all oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room,
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.

Whatever the literary vices of the twentieth century, let us thank heaven that we are still able to reverence our Shakspeare, and that for two weeks in the year, at any rate, his plays are set forth, with all due honour, within the walls of the little town that gave him birth. Now that the monster London, with ever-restless tentacles, has drawn me into her grasp, I like to remember that my earliest impressions of Shakspeare's works were formed in the Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, during Festival week. Year by year, as a schoolboy, I used to fight my way up the stone stairs that led to the gallery

and surrender myself, utterly, to the charm of the poet-wizard. Wonderful shillings that could buy such perfect happiness!

One of the chief objects of interest during this particular Festival Fortnight will be the site selected for the Carnegie Library. In company with the majority of those who take an interest in Stratford, I was under the impression that Mr. Carnegie had himself chosen the position for the erection of the building. Thanks to the courtesy of the Editor of the *Stratford-upon-Avon Herald*, however, I learn that the selection of the site was left entirely in the hands of the Town Council. I am also informed that the arrangements of the Town Council in this connection have met with the warm approval of many eminent people well fitted to pronounce an opinion on the subject. It therefore follows that I was too hasty when I alluded to Mr. Carnegie as a philanthropic iconoclast. Under the circumstances, the least I can do is to show myself equally hasty in making my humble apologies to the Laird of Skibo. At the same time, one cannot help thinking that the authorities at Stratford should have corrected before this the numerous misstatements that have been appearing in the London Press.

The man of the hour in the theatrical world is Mr. Edward Gordon Craig, who is responsible for the designing, direction, and production of "The Vikings," to say nothing of the costumes, the properties, and—last but by no means least—the lighting. So far as I was able to judge on the occasion of the first performance, Mr. Edward Gordon Craig's main idea with regard to light on the stage simply amounts to this, that the less you have of it the better. It was almost pathetic to see how the actors at the Imperial craned their necks heavenwards in desperate attempts to get a little light on their faces. Of the four Acts, three were conducted amid the deepest gloom; the remaining Act was delightfully discernible. Mr. Craig also objects, it seems, to a flat stage. He prefers to see the mimes picking their way through superfluous boulders and staggering up and down unnecessary stairs. Mr. Oscar Asche, I noticed, nearly came a cropper once or twice, and nobody appeared to be quite certain of a foothold. But the artistic triumph of the evening was scored by the gentlemen responsible for lowering the curtain after Miss Terry's little speech. They had evidently realised that it would be out of place, on such an evening, to drop the rag in the ordinary, straightforward manner, and thus it was that we were treated to a zigzag effect that seemed to me peculiarly appropriate.

Thomas Alfred Potts, the young mechanic who summoned a wild man whom he charged with assaulting him in a side-show at Bolingbroke Market, Battersea, has given us further evidence of the base ingratitude that is ingrained in human nature. Having paid his penny to see the wild man wrestle with his keeper and to hear him snarl at the crowd, he had the further privilege of a private, hand-to-hand struggle with the savage—an experience, one imagines, that falls to the lot of very few of the young mechanics of Battersea. Thomas, however, so far from congratulating himself on the romantic adventure, actually compelled the wild man to appear before the Magistrate at the South-Western Court and pay him compensation for damage done. Mr. John Brown, the wild man in question, was naturally indignant at the slight thus placed upon an artiste of some considerable reputation. As the keeper explained, the object of the exhibition was to illustrate the life of a South African savage. Had it not been for Mr. John Brown, Thomas Alfred might never have known that South African savages spend their lives in cages with heavy chains hanging from their wrists. Truly, the task of educating the masses is a thankless one. I extend the hand of sympathy to Mr. John Brown—through the bars.

WHEW! TO BE IN ENGLAND NOW THAT APRIL'S HERE.

—BROWNING (adapted).



THE CLUBMAN.

Seville in Holy Week—The Processions—Before the Bull-fight.

ON the whole, Seville is a delightful place in which to spend an Easter holiday. The getting to it is the only real difficulty, and I have during the past week heard sad stories of ladies who put off till too late a visit to the sleeping-car offices, and who could not find a seat anywhere in the train from Madrid, and especially of one disastrous night when over forty first-class passengers were left disconsolate on the platform, the railway authorities declaring that it was against the law of the land to add any more carriages to the train, and looking on one bold Briton who asked for a "special" as little better than a lunatic. Next to the train difficulty came the hotel one, for during the Holy Week and the Fair Week the two hotels which the British and Americans principally patronise in Seville are filled from ground-floor to roof, and at the "Madrid" I am told that for days before Palm Sunday between one and two hundred letters daily had to be written by the Secretary saying that there were no rooms for any intending visitors.

I had my way made smooth for me, both as regards the train and the hotel, by good friends, and arrived at Seville much less travel-worn than most of my compatriots, to find the city bathed in sunshine, scented with orange-flowers, and keeping holiday conscientiously until Maundy Thursday, when all music was stopped, the dancing-girls at the Novedades laid aside their castanets, no carriage was allowed to move through the streets, the windows of the churches were darkened, the bells all muffled, every lady discarded flowers and coloured dresses for the black of grief and the lace mantilla, and Seville kept the days of the Passion with an earnestness of mourning such as I have never seen in any other Catholic city.

All the afternoon and evening, and until the early hours of the morning, the processions went through the narrow streets on the Thursday and Friday. Each parish has its great group of carved and painted figures, most of them representing some scene of the great Christian tragedy, which it sends to join the cortège. Round these groups are placed hundreds of tapers; before them walk penitents in sugar-loaf cowls and gowns of purple or white or black, their faces hidden, and carrying each a taper; behind them march a band of the regiment whose barracks are in the parish, or of some school or of some society, playing a funeral-march. Thirty men under the gilded base, hidden by draperies, carry each of the great groups, and every forty or fifty yards they set it down for a rest. Early in the afternoon, the processions from the parishes begin to converge on the Calle Sierpes, the narrow main-street of the town. Before the sun has set, the Civil Guards who head the processions have begun to file before the Mayor of the town, who sits under a purple canopy before the Town Hall, and at eleven at night the last of the groups has not passed. Through the Cathedral, the immense arches of which are in darkness, go the processions, while Esclava's "Miserere" is sung before the shrouded altar, and before the shrine where the consecrated

oil is placed and before the high altar each group of figures is set down in turn. At midnight each procession begins to make its slow way back to its own parish, and at three in the morning the drums are still beating and the bugles wailing throughout the city.

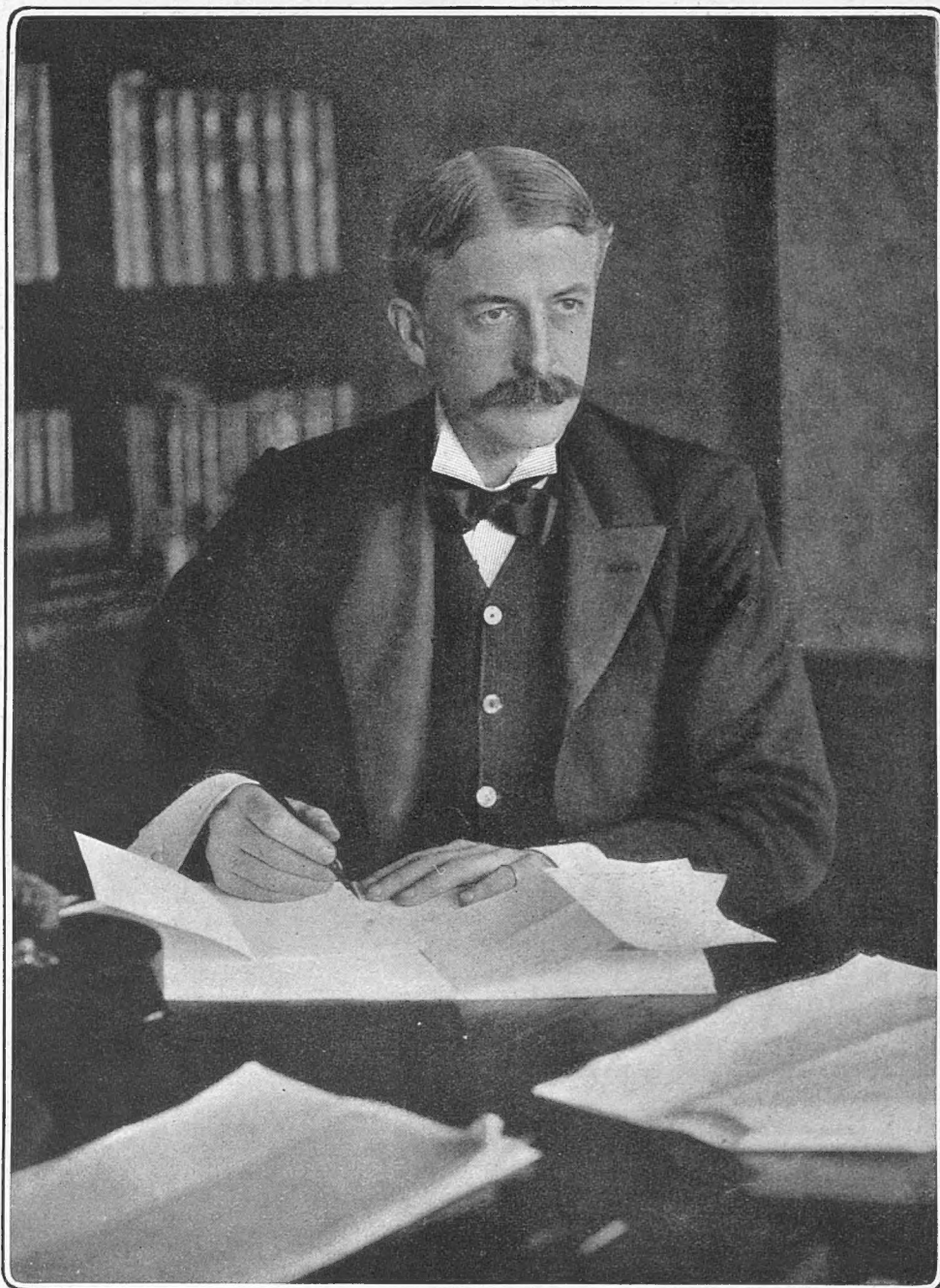
In the Cathedral from morning till midnight the deep voices of the priests never cease before the altars, and there are the special services—the washing of the feet of twelve poor men lifted high on a platform, before each of whom in turn the Archbishop kneels, the extinguishing one by one of the candles that burn in the vast bronzen Tenebrario, the rending of the white and the black veils before the altar, and, on Easter Sunday, a high mass celebrated with a marvellous splendour of vestment and all the appeals to the senses that the Church of Rome lends to the great feasts of the Christian year. When the Passion week is over, Seville goes holiday-making once more; the drive by the river is again thronged with the men riding

curvetting grey horses, and the carriages drawn by four or five gaily decorated mules, or by a team of little horses with bells on strips of leather round their necks. The first holiday treat is to go out on the Saturday before Easter to see the seven bulls that are to be killed on Sunday in the paddocks, a couple of miles outside the town. There are two things no Spaniard of any position in Society can be without—a carriage and a box at the theatre, and for a small town Seville can show an enormous number of equipages of all kinds. On the wide, dusty road, I passed as I went out every kind of vehicle.

MR. GEORGE WYNDHAM.

The Right Hon. George Wyndham, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, is one of the most picturesque figures in the Commons. Handsome, courteous, and clever, he is a favourite with the House, and his recent speech in introducing the Irish Land Bill, if shorter than was expected, contained more matter than many speeches of much greater length. Though Mr. Wyndham's proposals have been much criticised in various quarters, it is a significant fact that the leaders of the Irish Party have accepted them with almost unqualified approval.

Mr. Wyndham has had a varied career. At the age of twenty he joined the Coldstream Guards, and served in the Suakim Campaign of 1885, gaining the war-medal and the Khedive's Star. Two years later he left the Army for a political career, and as Private Secretary to Mr. Balfour, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for War, Cabinet Minister, and in his present position, he has shown that an aristocrat of the aristocrats may be not only an extremely clever but an eminently practical man. It is a curious fact that Mr. Wyndham, through his mother, is a descendant of Lord Edward Fitz-Gerald, in his time a famous Irish rebel, which may account in part for the Chief Secretary's sympathy with the inhabitants of the Green Isle. In 1887, Mr. Wyndham married the Countess Grosvenor, and is thus step-father to the Duke of Westminster and his sisters. Saighton Towers, near Chester, the Chief Secretary's country-seat, is a peculiarly charming place, for both Mr. Wyndham and the Countess Grosvenor do all that is possible to preserve the old-world charm of what was at one time the abode of the Abbots of Chester.



THE RIGHT HON. GEORGE WYNDHAM, CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND, IN HIS ROOM AT THE IRISH OFFICE.

Photograph by Ernest H. Mills, Hampstead.

THE STORY OF "OLD HEIDELBERG" AS TOLD NIGHTLY AT THE ST. JAMES'S.



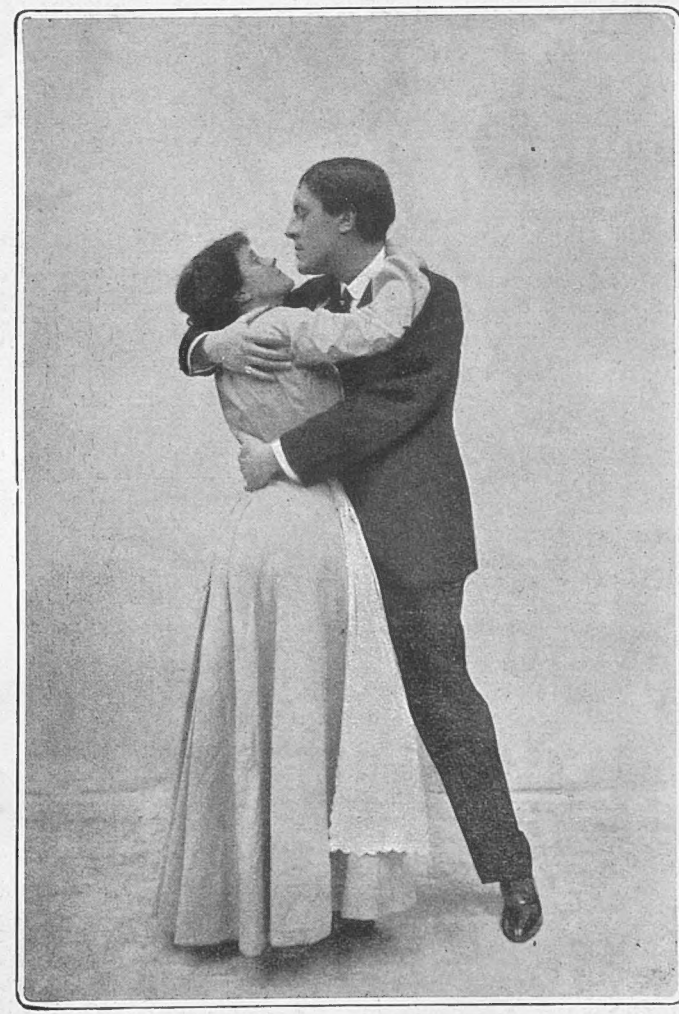
Karl Heinrich (Mr. George Alexander), Hereditary Prince of Sachsen-Karlsburg, goes to the University of Heidelberg for one year. There he meets and falls in love with Käthie (Miss Eva Moore), the niece of an innkeeper.



In the height of his bliss he is recalled to Karlsburg to take up his Regency. At first he refuses to go, but is eventually persuaded by his old tutor (Mr. J. D. Beveridge).



Käthie, smiling through her tears, helps him to pack his bag. Karl gives her a keepsake, and they say good-bye.



But not for ever, for, on the eve of his State-arranged-marriage, he dashes down to Heidelberg and sees his true love just once more. Then he returns to the post of duty.

THE SHAKSPERE FESTIVAL.

HIGH festival was ushered in at Stratford-on-Avon on Monday and will prevail until the end of next week, and Shakspeare's little town is full to overflowing with enthusiastic celebrants of its great townsman's memory. To-morrow (Thursday, the 23rd), St. George's Day, and the reputed birthday and death-day too of Shakspeare, will see the formal decking of the poet's tomb, inaugurated years ago as a custom for the boys of the Stratford Grammar School and now grown into an altogether larger ceremony. Stately wreaths and laurels are contributed by the visitors and by many a distant votary as well, but none of them more fitting in character than the multitude of humbler nosegays of such flowers as in Shakspeare's own time did "paint the meadows with delight." This pleasant ceremony will be followed by a public luncheon, at which sundry distinguished speakers will be present. Sunday brings the annual "Shakspeare Sermon" at the Parish Church, whither the townspeople and their guests adjourn in that rather quaintly straggling "procession" which makes one wonder anew each year why the authorities don't ask Mr. Benson to stage-manage it for them.

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RED HILL	10 27	RAMSGATE TOWN	11 15
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TONBRIDGE	11 6	DOVER TOWN	11 55
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STROOD (S.E.)	11 25	FOLKESTONE CENTRAL	12 5
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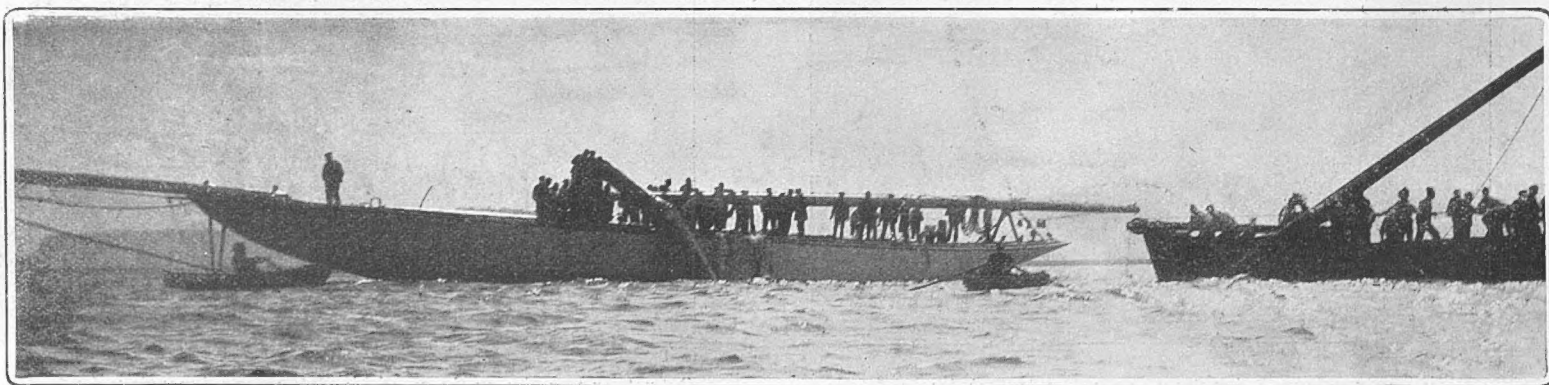
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April 22, 1903.

Signature.....



THE DISASTER TO "SHAMROCK III." A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ACCIDENT ON FRIDAY LAST.

By the Adelphi Press Agency. (See "The Mere Man.")



SMALL TALK *of the* WEEK

KING EDWARD, who has so vivid an historic imagination, as has been proved in many of his excellent and thoughtful speeches, will surely feel a curious thrill when he first enters the splendid suite of apartments which has been prepared for him at the Quirinal, for the present home of the King and Queen of Italy was, till thirty short years ago, the Palace of the Popes, Pius IX: having been the last Pontiff who inhabited the Quirinal as master.

Although the outside of the Royal Palace has no pretensions to great architectural beauty, the windows of many of the apartments have fine views of the "Eternal City," and the rooms which will be occupied by King Edward are extremely splendid, especially as regards their decorations and furniture. His Majesty was so well grounded in the classics that doubtless he will take a very real pleasure in "doing" any of the great sights of Rome for which he may have time.

The King in the Mediterranean.

For over seven hundred years no Sovereign of England has sailed in the Mediterranean, the last King who did so having been Richard I., on his way to the Crusades in 1190. King Edward has sent his fleet to Algiers to salute the ruler of France, who now happens to be a President, and Richard I., in alliance with Philip of France, sailed with his fleet from Marseilles on his way to Palestine. He had to put in at Messina on account of the rough weather, and in the spring of 1191 he stopped at Cyprus to dethrone its ruler, who had behaved ill-mannerly to Berengaria, his betrothed wife. On his return from Palestine, Richard again crossed the Mediterranean and sailed up the Adriatic, and then started on that journey which resulted in his being taken prisoner by the Duke of Austria. That was in December 1192, and since that time no English King has sailed those waters until this year. Happily, King Edward's journey is one of peace, and it is quite unthinkable that in any circumstances he should be captured by Francis Joseph, the aged Emperor of Austria.

A Touching Family Group.

The deep love which binds Queen Alexandra to her father is prettily shown in the group which I publish this week, and which gives an interesting glimpse of the way in which King Christian and his three daughters spend their leisure when enjoying a brief holiday each spring and autumn. In these days, when all the world has gone crazy over "Bridge," there is something soothing in the contemplation of a game of old-fashioned whist. Since the time when a Court Jester more clever than most invented cards to please a Royal master, Royal personages have always been very fond of card-games, especially of that most ancient of all, "Patience." As a young woman, Queen Victoria was a great whist-player. All her children have inherited her aptitude in this direction: this is why they are so remarkably successful with the latest development of that famous game.

A Charming Social Revival.

It would seem as if the Fancy-dress Ball was going to be the great social feature of the coming Season, for there are rumours of many such functions. Last week, Yorkshire was *en fête* in honour of a great Fancy-dress Ball given by Lord and Lady Galway at Serlby Hall. The entertainment celebrated the coming-of-age of the host and hostess's only son, and Lady Galway received

her guests in a splendid costume copied from a portrait of her ancestress, Marie, Countess of Lindsay, while Lord Galway appeared in an orange velvet doublet and hose slashed with steel. Miss Violet Monckton, the pretty daughter of the house, in a white, pearl-embroidered satin frock, recalled a noted beauty, Kathleen, first Duchess of Rutland. Many years have gone by since there took place in London a Royal Fancy-dress Ball, but it is very possible that the Prince and Princess of Wales will celebrate their début, in a social sense, at Marlborough House by some such great function; and Lady Warwick may repeat the glories of her *poudre* dance of Warwick Castle at Brook House.

Rome on Strike.

One of the most absurd and useless strikes on record took place this week (writes my Correspondent) in Rome. The printers, after fruitlessly endeavouring to obtain higher pay, and after striking for a whole month without result, succeeded in working upon the tender sympathies of their fellow-townsmen and in proclaiming a general strike. A more foolish and short-sighted step they could not have embarked upon had they tried ever so hard. Rome was full of visitors, Easter week was fast approaching, a golden harvest richer than any in years gone by was awaiting all. Suddenly the strike was proclaimed, and Rome, which had hitherto resembled a perpetual market of flowers, fancy goods, works of art, antiquities, and what not, became, as it were by a flash of lightning, an empty, soulless, dispirited, trafficless, desert-like, ruined city. Foreigners left by hundreds; the hotels, which had been so overfull that it was quite impossible to obtain a room beforehand for love or money, were deserted and left practically empty; the streets were as silent as those of a city of the dead. This lasted for



THE KING OF DENMARK PLAYING WHIST WITH HIS THREE DAUGHTERS (THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND, THE DOWAGER EMPRESS OF RUSSIA, AND THE DUCHESS OF CUMBERLAND).

three days, and then the inevitable happened. The end of the strike was arrived at, and work was resumed. But by that time all the rich foreigners had left the place. Easter week came, and no one was left in Rome to purchase anything. Never had Nemesis fallen so speedily upon wrong-doers as now. All the stock of goods lay heavy



MISS VIOLET RIDGEWAY.

Photograph by H. Walter Barnett, Hyde Park Corner.

and useless upon the shopmen's hands; cabs plied fruitlessly for hire; flower-sellers and newspaper-vendors cried their goods in vain. The strike had wrought its work, and those who had driven away the buyers had nothing to do but sit still and bemoan their folly and hope for better times.

The King's Arrival in Rome.

The great question of the hour now is, Will the King visit the Vatican or will he not? The "Black" Party is, of course, most anxious that a visit to the Pope may be rendered possible; the "White" Party, on the contrary, aver that it would be quite impossible for His Majesty, when a guest of the King of Italy, to pay a visit to the rival Court. While it is true that complications might arise of a trivial character through such a visit, it is generally supposed that diplomacy is able to settle the question in a manner satisfactory to all parties. It is quite possible, if not highly probable, that King Edward will send an autograph letter expressing his regret at not being able to visit the aged Pontiff, and giving as the reason the extreme shortness of the visit to Rome. Meanwhile, the British Embassy is in a fine state of confusion; all the rooms are quite bare, Lord Currie's furniture having only just left and Sir Francis Bertie's having not yet arrived from England. It is to be hoped that all will be arranged in time for the coming of the King on the 27th of the month.

Roman Easter-Eggs.

Easter-eggs are as much *à la mode* in Rome as they are in London, Paris, Berlin, or any other capital. The shops are all full of every imaginable shape of egg: small eggs, big eggs; green, yellow, striped, spotted, and dotted eggs; eggs with hares sitting astride on the top, others with hares inside; some containing babies, some chickens, some sweetmeats, and some nothing at all. The sweetmeat eggs are undoubtedly the most popular of all, for, though hares and chickens are sometimes made of sugar, such sugary animals are apt rather to cloy than to delight. According to the Italian version of the story of the origin of the Easter-egg, the egg was, in its first beginning, red, being made in imitation of the celebrated red egg laid by a hen belonging to the parents of the Emperor Alexander Severus at the time of the arrival of the latter gentleman into the world. The early Christians saw in the Easter-egg an allusion to the resurrection of Christ. Some there are who maintain that the great value attachable to the Easter-egg is due to the fact that a huge dish of eggs was the first substantial food served up by devout Christians after the lengthy fast. Whatever be the true signification, the Easter-egg remains as popular as ever and affords the greatest amusement to little Romans as well as to children of all other nationalities in Europe.

Some of the Season's Beauties.

It is rumoured that this coming Season will be especially rich in youthful beauties and in interesting débutantes. That the Queen would like to see the smart matron dethroned in honour of the *ingénue* has long been believed, and certainly many of the great functions which are already announced as to take place in May and June seem to have been devised from the débutante's point of view. Among the prettiest of girl-beauties may be specially mentioned Lady Muriel Gordon-Lennox, the stately-looking young daughter of Lord March—she has been known to their Majesties from early childhood, for they have both often stayed with her venerable grandfather, the Duke of Richmond, at Goodwood House—Miss Winifred Paget, the daughter of Lady Alexander Paget, who was in her own day a noted beauty; and Miss Violet Ridgeway, who is very picturesque and quaint-looking, recalling one of Romney's portraits rather than a twentieth-century girl.

The New Financial Secretary.

An English Conservative has been succeeded by a Scotch Liberal-Unionist as Financial Secretary in the Government. Mr. Hayes Fisher's successor, Mr. Arthur Elliot, earned the gratitude of the Prime Minister by the very clever and effective defence of the Army administration which he made in reply to the Beckett group, but he possesses merits of a more enduring character. He is one of the most intellectual of members, has an interesting personality, and has proved himself a capable Editor of the *Edinburgh Review*. For twelve years Mr. Elliot represented his native county in Scotland, but was out of Parliament for a considerable period, and now sits for Durham City. He was one of those staunch Unionists on the Liberal side who occasioned Mr. Gladstone so much embarrassment by their candour and ability. The House listens with pleasure to his incisive, piquant speeches. He has a thin, refined face, and a slight frame.

The Budget.

The man of the week in Parliament is the Chancellor of the Exchequer. His Budget has been anticipated with great interest, and even with considerable anxiety. A strong effort was made to induce Mr. Ritchie to delay relief to the income-tax payers in order that a free breakfast-table might be provided by the removal of several indirect taxes; but he took up a firm attitude which checked the agitation. His firmness has also had a personal result in increasing his own reputation. There



LADY MURIEL GORDON-LENNOX.

Photograph by Lafayette, Bond Street, W.

were doubts as to whether the new Chancellor would be equal to the post. He has yet to be tested. Meantime, however, he has shown himself to be a man with a mind of his own and with a tongue as frank and fearless as Sir Michael Hicks-Beach's. At the age of sixty-five, in a critical period of our financial history, he produces his first Budget. It may make him or mar him.

The Czarevitch in Fancy Dress.

St. Petersburg Society is still discussing the marvellous Fancy-dress Ball, which is said to have been the finest costume Court function ever given at the far-famed Winter Palace, or rather, at the Hermitage. The costumes chosen belonged to that most interesting period of history, the reign of Peter the Great's father. The Emperor and Empress appeared as the Czar and Czarina of that day, the Empress exquisitely lovely in a gown of gold brocade, and wearing on her head an old Russian coif set with diamonds and sapphires as large as hazel-nuts. All the Grand Dukes vied with one another in the splendour and historical accuracy of their uniforms and costumes, and the Czarevitch very naturally attracted special attention, for he had elected to appear in the curious, gorgeous habiliments of a great Boyar. Everything was done to keep up the illusion, even the orchestra wearing a type of uniform which has not been worn in Russia for over two hundred years.

King Edward's Russian Great-Nieces.

Our Sovereign is called "uncle" in six of the great European countries, and of his revered mother's direct descendants in the fourth generation there are none in whom His Majesty takes a more kindly interest than in the pretty little group composed of his Russian great-nieces. The four daughters of the Emperor and Empress of Russia are much of an age with the four stalwart little sons of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and, though it would be difficult to find two countries more entirely different than England and Russia, King Edward's British grandchildren and his Russian great-nieces are being brought up in much the same way and under the care of good old-fashioned nurses and attendants. The Empress is much with her little daughters; indeed, she is so devoted to her children that she never cares to leave them for more than a very few days, and the eldest Grand Duchess is quite a traveller; before she was two years old she had made the tour of Europe.

Mitrovitza.

Mitrovitza, the Albanian town which has acquired notoriety owing to the murder of the Russian Consul, M. Stcherbina, is built at the bottom of a valley, and not a single house can be seen from the railway-station. The town is situated against the rugged mountains which protect it to the north, and to the south a gentle slope runs down to the Plain of Kossovo, from which it is separated by the River Sitnitza. Mitrovitza is at the junction of two rivers, the Sitnitza and the Ibar, which guard it in a semi-circle on the south, as the mountains guard it in a semi-circle to the north. When the Albanian levies advanced from Vuchitrn, they came up from the south, and so were terribly exposed to the fire of the Turkish artillery, which did great damage amongst them. It was on the Plain of Kossovo, in 1389, that the Serbian Empire was destroyed by the Turks.

Swiss Marksmen at Bisley.

This year's Bisley, which begins on July 11, will be remarkable for the fact that eight of the best marksmen in Switzerland are coming over to compete. At the recent rifle-competition in Paris they won all the first-prizes, and, so far, they have never been beaten. At Bisley they will have to meet some of the finest shots in the world, and, if they wish to maintain their record, they will have to show some exceptionally fine shooting. The Swiss have always been famous as rifle-shots, like most mountain races.



THE CZAREVITCH IN FANCY DRESS.

The Harting Guild.

In a quiet, unobtrusive way, the Harting Guild of Handicraft is doing not a little to advance the cause of art in the home and elsewhere. The Guild consists of a number of artists who desire to identify their activity with the country rather than with the town, and the departments which it embraces include church and domestic decoration, stained-glass, printing, wood and metal work, gesso, leather bindings, &c. Only work done entirely by hand is undertaken, and the aim of the Guild is "not to move with the commercial spirit of the times, but rather to produce such as, being the outcome of a glad and reverent sense of Nature, cannot fail to be finer in quality and effect than that which is entirely inspired by a desire for gain." The Second Exhibition of the Guild, held at its headquarters, South Harting, Petersfield, from the 6th to the 18th inst., brought together a large number of exhibits of all kinds, from designs for electric fittings to one of a Cathedral, a notable feature being some very fine drawings by Mr. Gunning King, whose work has so often appeared in these pages. Applications for membership, accompanied by specimens of work, are always most carefully considered by the Guild, and honorary members may join

on payment of a small fee which entitles them to various privileges. Mr. James Guthrie is the Honorary Secretary.

New English Art Club.

A strongly conceived portrait-group, "Mrs. Oliver, Mark, and Betty," by Mr. C. W. Furse, occupies the place of honour in the exhibition of the New English Art Club at the Dudley Gallery, and calls for the remark that

the artist has, to a great extent, altered his methods, for in this striking work the dominating influence of Mr. Sargent is felt so much as to cause one to reflect that it threatens to rob other painters of their own individuality. But, though Mr. Furse has achieved something of the dashing technique, he has not quite arrived at the qualities of colour that are, after all, Mr. Sargent's strongest point. The other pictures include much that is pleasant, but little that has the distinctive note of originality which one has learnt to look for in this exhibition. A noteworthy advance has to be credited to Miss Alice Fanner, whose landscape, "Cooper's Hill," is a charming example of well-observed open-air colour and truthful



THE CHILDREN OF THE CZAR AND CZARINA: A NEW GROUP.

rendering of sunshine and shadow, and her "Making a Rick" is also remarkable for lively play of sunlight as well as for the movement that she has imparted to the figures of the labourers. There is, however, more originality in Mr. P. Wilson Steer's landscape, "The Golden Valley," whose expanse is gleaming in warm light. The work is individual in technique, and recalls a transient effect of Nature. There is something impressive in Mr. Rothenstein's reserved treatment of "The Doll's House," and the show includes some other interiors very skilfully rendered, notably the examples by Mr. L. A. Harrison, Mr. D. Muirhead, and Mr. W. W. Russell. In Mr. C. W. Furse's "The Song," the heads of the figures seem too large for their bodies, but the still-life is good. The hard modelling of the waves in Mr. Moffat Lindner's "Ground Sea from the Atlantic" is scarcely like Nature, and produces a sensation of arrested motion; but his Dutch scenes are spirited and characteristic. There is a good portrait of "C. Hamilton, Esq.," by Mr. H. Hildesheim, and Mr. W. Orpen's "The Red Scarf" is an effective figure-study in which the face of the woman looks pallid by comparison with the red garment, as it doubtless did in reality, so that the result is not entirely agreeable, though it testifies to a conscientious comparison of colour. Mr. Bellingham-Smith shows some freshness of conception in his representation of "A Tea-Party" out-of-doors, but the effect of light and colour does not come near enough to Nature to be quite satisfactory. The "Portion of a School-Treat," by Mr. H. S. Chancellor, with children spreading the white table-cloth on the grass, is distinguished by breadth and good colour. There are some clever water-colours, including works by Mr. Brabazon, who is well represented in the broad treatment and delicately suggested atmosphere of "Evening on the Riviera." Mr. Bernhard Sickert's bold and effective colour-scheme, "The Castle of Ischia," also deserves appreciative recognition.

To be elected to the Athenæum Club "under Rule II." is supposed to be one of the greatest honours which can befall the mortal Englishman. This honour has lately fallen to the share of that most gifted and modest of painters, Sir Ernest Waterlow, who has done so much to revive the lovely art of water-colour in this country. Sir Ernest Waterlow is an essentially education painter; the son of a distinguished lithographer, his artistic education took place in England, and he was only three-and-twenty when he won the Turner Gold Medal. Like all men who have achieved success, he has known how to put his Pegasus in harness, and he rarely spends a really idle day. Of the many qualities which distinguish his work this is not the place to speak. "Critics rush in where mortals fear to tread," but the fact that his delightful pictures appeal both to "the Man in the Street" and to the enlightened connoisseur gives the measure of his talent more than any mere praise could do.

Paris and the King. Probably few people realise how very notable is our Sovereign's forthcoming visit to Paris. Edward VII. will be the first King of England to enter the French Capital as such since Henry VI. And this although France was so boundlessly hospitable to the exiled Stewarts. Forty-seven years ago His Majesty first made acquaintance with the Gay City, but he and

his elder sister did not actually live in Paris, for the Royal children were wisely housed at the country Palace of Saint Cloud, whose destruction in the Franco-Prussian War was one of the worst of the many acts of vandalism which took place during 'l'Année Terrible.' Since that far-off day, the King, as Prince of Wales, has constantly returned to Paris, and he has many intimate friends both in Tory and Republican France.

Loubet in London? Already there are enthusiastic folk who are looking forward to giving President Loubet a warm welcome in London. The King would doubtless delight to entertain the Head of the French Republic, the more so that not only M. Loubet but all his predecessors, without exception, have ever gone out of their way to show marked respect and attention to His Majesty, and, what our Sovereign considers as far more important, to our late venerated Queen. If the President should indeed pay the King a return visit, he will receive such a welcome from London as has rarely been accorded to even the friendliest of foreign Sovereigns.

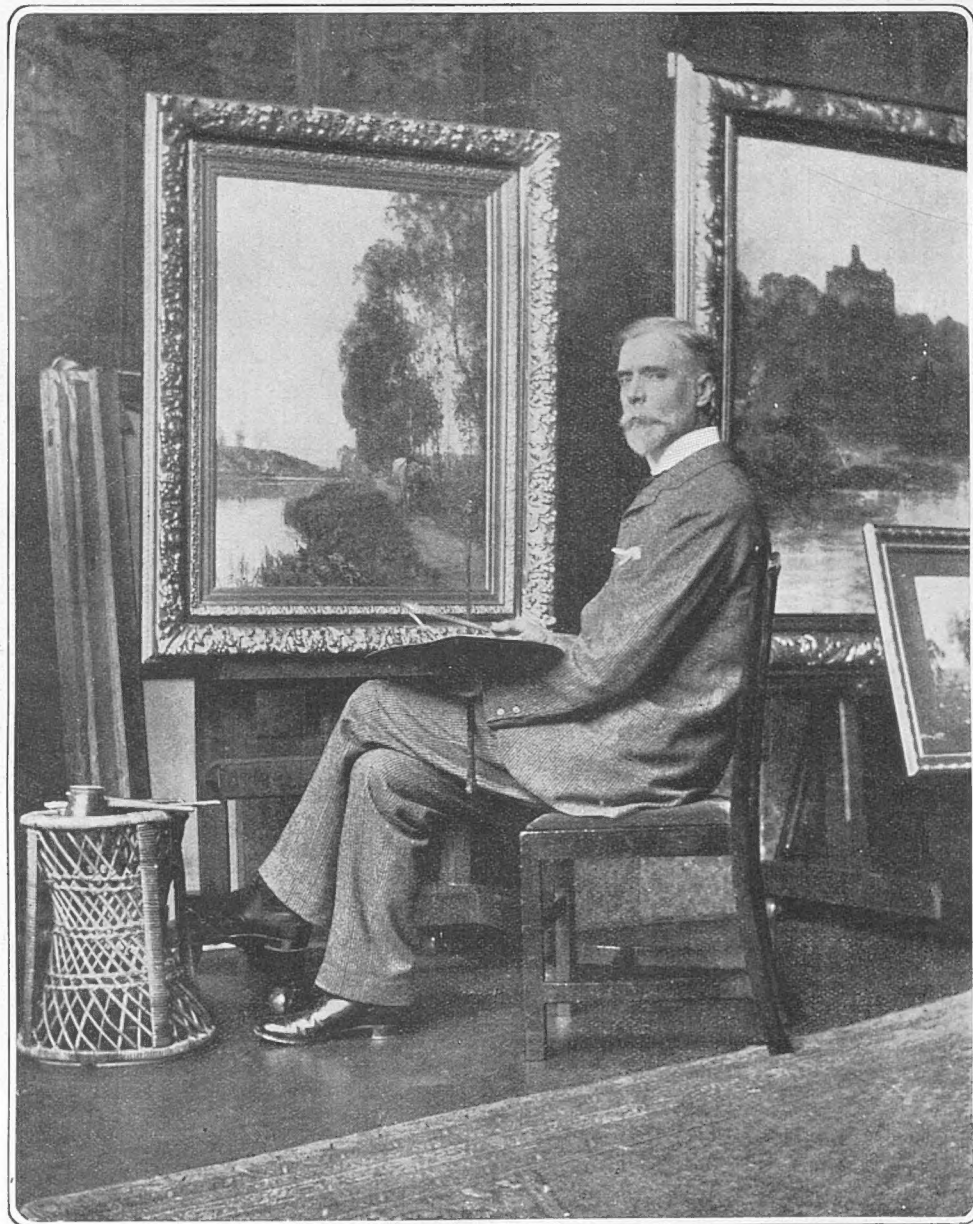
This week, Princess Mary of Wales (as she is now officially styled) celebrates her sixth birthday. To be the only sister of four brothers is generally enviable, more so than usual in the Royal caste. The little Princess, at the present age, recalls Landseer's well-known portrait of her grandmother, the popular Duchess of Teck, for she is a fine, sturdy-looking child, with a dimpled face full of animation and intelligence. There have been but few Royal Marys, the last Princess in the direct line to be so named being a daughter of George III.

The Season will begin early this year, and this in spite of their Majesties' "Scottish fortnight." Quite a number of important social events, especially of the dancing kind, are already arranged to take place within the next five weeks, and the two first Courts are expected to be not only exceptionally well attended, but also to differ in more than one particular from those held in the winter. At least one huge charity fête is to take place, under the special patronage, it seems, of Princess

Louise of Schleswig-Holstein, who, since she joined the group of Royal Londoners, is following in her admirable mother's footsteps and concerning herself actively in every form of good work.

Last of the Exhibitions. Those who visited Paris in 1900 saw the last of the famous series at eleven years' interval of Exhibitions that, except in the last instance, were world's glories. The Champ de Mars, which is now almost cleared of the ruins, is to be put up to public auction in lots. The Ville de Paris is confident that the Champ de Mars will rival in beauty the Champs-Élysées. There will be splendid avenues, open spaces, fountains, gardens, flowers, and trees. The Embankment will be a veritable feast for the eyes in summer. So disappears the only open space of importance in the city.

Mr. Brimley Johnson is showing genuine sense and good taste in his shilling books. "From the Abyss," by "An Inhabitant," is a refreshing contrast to most books on the slums. It is illuminating, and there is heart in it as well as literary power.



SIR ERNEST WATERLOW, THE RECENTLY ELECTED ROYAL ACADEMICIAN, PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCHES TO HIS DIPLOMA PICTURE.

A Delightful Artist. Mr. Yeend King may esteem himself among those happy people who can look forward to leaving the world brighter than they found it. Though still on the right side of fifty, he has accomplished an enormous amount of work and

immortalised many a lovely scene and landscape in his native land. While essentially an English artist, he, perhaps, owes some of his technical skill to the fact that he studied in Paris with Bonnat and Cormon. He has long been an honoured member of that wise group of artists who have made the old-world suburb of St. John's Wood seem one vast studio. Painters are popularly supposed to be unclubbable individuals, but, if



MR. YEEND KING, A.R.A.

Photograph by Miss Lena Connell, Grove End Road, N.W.

this be so, Mr. Yeend King is the one exception that proves the rule, for he belongs to no less than six Clubs.

The Particular Baptists.

A unique spectacle took place at Warboys, Huntingdonshire, on Sunday, March 29. It was a great day for the Particular Baptists, when eight members were admitted to the church by being publicly baptised in the village horse-pond. No fewer than three thousand people came from all parts of the country to witness this quaint custom.

Brancepeth Castle. Lord Boyne's beautiful country seat, though less known to fame than such places as Chillingham Castle, Ford Castle, and Bamborough, is one of the most stately and splendid of Northern strongholds, dating from the days of King John, in whose possession it was for a while. Lord Boyne sits as Baron Brancepeth, the Barony dating from the year 1866. Brancepeth came into the family by the marriage of a Miss Russell to the late

Lord Boyne, who added to his surname of Hamilton that of his wife. As regards the interior of Brancepeth Castle, many of the rooms have the special charm which cannot be acquired by any conscious effort, for modern architects seem to have lost the secret of combining stately spaciousness with comfort. There is a fine collection of family portraits, and much of the furniture belongs to the period of which authentic specimens are so much sought after by collectors.

New German Diplomacy.

The "new German Diplomacy," as applied to the United States, is exciting increasing discontent in the Fatherland (writes the Berlin Correspondent of *The Sketch*). Germans, who suffer from a hypersensitive sense of patriotic dignity, receive agonising shocks when they read the big head-lines of the American Press announcing that "Roosevelt called the German Ambassador 'Speckie,'" and Maximilian Harden, their modern Junius, has deemed the occasion a fitting one to ask whether the American Ambassador in Berlin goes to the trouble of waiting on the Emperor at the station when His Majesty starts on a journey, and whether the Emperor offers his horses to Mr. Tower or any other of the Ambassadors. The answer is, of course, in the negative, and the Berlin satirist declares, with exceeding bitterness, that scenes such as that which marked the departure of Mr. Roosevelt from Washington the other day could arise only out of relations bearing a suspicious resemblance to suzerainty and vassalage. No, the German public does not like all this Diplomatic love-making to the United States. I am, at the same time, quite convinced that it would not



THE CEREMONY OF BAPTISM AS PERFORMED BY THE PARTICULAR BAPTISTS: AN IMMERSION IN THE VILLAGE HORSE-POND AT WARBOYS, HUNTINGDONSHIRE.

Photograph by Herbert E. Middlebrooke.



BRANCEPETH CASTLE, VISCOUNT BOYNE'S BEAUTIFUL DURHAM SEAT.

Photograph by G. Hastings.

have objected so strongly to the behaviour of Baron Speck if the literal signification of that Ambassador's name could be construed into something more dignified than "bacon."

A "Palace Revolution."

The German indignation has been much intensified by the conduct of Baron Speck's "American wife," who insisted that the ladies of the Embassy should accord her preference by making the first call. Frau Speck's demand, it goes without saying, is in accordance not only with American and English but with Diplomatic usage all the world over; but it conflicts with the social rule prevailing in Germany, that the newcomer should be the first to leave cards on those with whom he or she wishes to be on terms of acquaintanceship. Ambassadors and their wives form an exception to this rule even in Germany. After they have been presented to the Emperor and the Royal Family, the Court Chamberlain invariably publishes in the "Imperial Gazette" a high-sounding notice instructing the members of Court Society that it is their duty to make the first call. This was the procedure adopted a few weeks ago in the case of the American Ambassador in Berlin, Mr. Tower. But in Washington the ladies of the Embassy, who number among their

ranks a Countess, have manifested furious indignation at the conduct of Frau Speck. They have refused to call on her. The consequence is that there will be a complete change of staff. The German newspapers declare themselves scandalised at the "ease with which an American woman married to a German Ambassador has been able to secure the removal of an entire Ambassadorial staff."

The German Easter. Easter in Germany was a period of driving wind and snow. The proprietors of beer-gardens in the rural environments of the Capital, encouraged by the brilliant weather of the week before, had made elaborate preparations for the accommodation of the holiday crowds; but their gardens and saloons remained empty and their immense stocks of provisions were unconsumed. In the city, on the other hand, the places of entertainment were crammed. As usual, however, the largest profits were netted by the chocolate-shops. I was astonished to observe the sums expended on Easter delicacies, mainly eggs, by people whose appearance betokened anything rather than prosperity. They crowded into the shops, purchasing packets of chocolate and fancy eggs having an average value of from ten to twenty shillings. As much money was spent, I should think, as at Yuletide. The custom of lighting Christmas fir-trees is not more widespread than that of Easter-egg searching. Even the Imperial breakfast-table was decorated on Easter Sunday with the most costly specimens of the confectioner's art in honour of this custom. Silver baskets with chocolate nests and beautifully coloured eggs were placed before the Imperial pair and each of their children. In the afternoon the Imperial Family went to the Palace of Bellevue, where the Easter "bird's-nesting" gave rise to fun fast and furious. The Emperor is said to be especially ingenious in his selection of hiding-places for the eggs, which, by the way, contain costly presents destined for his children and household.

Madame Sobrino. Madame Sobrino, who has so rapidly come to the front as one of our leading sopranos, will be singing at Covent Garden on the opening night of the season. She is the possessor of a very fine and beautifully trained voice, and during her short career as a singer has appeared with much success in opera, oratorio, and concerts both here and in America. She is a daughter of Ludwig Schmitz, the painter, and at one time studied art with a view to a career. Discovering, however, that she was gifted with a voice, the brush was abandoned, and for some time she studied singing with Wally Schauseil (a pupil of the old Lamperti), Lilli Lehmann,



MADAME SOBRINO.

Photograph by Miss Lena Connell, Grove End Road, N.W.

and Frau Joachimi in Berlin. Madame Sobrino had the advantage of studying the Wagnerian rôles at the Wagner School in Bayreuth, and these are the parts in which she will be heard at Covent Garden during the forthcoming season. Her husband is Señor Sobrino, the well-known pianist.

Edinburgh's New Fever Hospital to be Opened by the King.

One of the functions to be performed by the King on Wednesday, May 13, will be the formal opening of Edinburgh's new Fever Hospital, situated at Colinton Mains, in the Morningside district of Edinburgh. The long drive from Holyrood through some of the main streets of Edinburgh will not be less than five miles in length ere the goal is reached; after the opening



MISS WINIFRED PAGET, DAUGHTER OF LADY ALEXANDER PAGET.

(SEE PAGE 8.)

ceremony, the King drives across country to Dalkeith. Edinburgh Town Council more than half-a-dozen years ago purchased the farm of Colinton Mains, extending to a hundred and thirty acres, for £20,500, upon which to erect a much-needed Fever Hospital. The old Hospital is the building of the old Infirmary, in the very heart of the town. The new situation has commanding views of the range of the Pentland Hills, with Swanston, home for some years of R. L. Stevenson, right in the foreground. In the woods of Dreghorn, Malloch, or Mallet, composed his ballad of "William and Margaret"; while the Six-foot Club, of which Hogg and Scott were members, used to gather at Hunter's Tryst, now a dairy. Some seventy-five acres of the land at Colinton Mains have been utilised for the erection of the new Fever Hospital, which will accommodate six hundred patients, at a cost of £600 per bed. This works out to £360,000, a sum much in excess of the original estimate. The staff accommodation, besides doctor, matron, and assistant, will be for a hundred and fifty nurses and sixty servants. The work has been in progress for about five years, and, although formally opened on May 13, the place will not be ready for occupation for a considerable time yet. There are two main-entrances, that from the east from Morningside, by which the King will enter, the other from the west by Colinton Road.

The site is all that could be desired for health, nestling at the south side of Craiglockhart Hill, about four hundred feet above sea-level. The boiler-house, in a building to the east, is fitted with four Lancashire boilers, with double furnace-tube, and Sinclair's self-stoking apparatus, fitted by Sinclair, of Albion Boiler Works, Leith. A motor, driven by electricity from the town mains, works the self-stoking apparatus and the laundry machinery in the building close by. The electric lighting is also from the town supply and there are emergency gas-pipes also. The hot water, of which an enormous quantity will be required, circulates in an underground, brick-built tunnel to feed the radiators and for baths, &c. The general offices, kitchen, dining-rooms, nurses' home, and ward-assistants' home are in the centre of the pavilions. The ward pavilions, with eighty feet between each, are in double rows to east and west; those to the east are for scarlet-fever patients, and those in the west for diphtheria, typhoid, erysipelas, measles, chicken-pox, whooping-cough, and typhus. These pavilions, though isolated, are connected by means of covered ways. The gas cooking-stoves are by Slater, London; the mason-work by Lownie, Edinburgh; the joiner-work by J. and F. Forrest; the plumber-work by Patrick Knox and Sons; the heating and ventilating, of a most elaborate description, by John Low and Sons, Edinburgh and Manchester; and the fire-proof flooring by Thomas Potter and Co., London. When completed, it promises to be one of the best-equipped hospitals of the kind in the kingdom.

Li Hung Chang's Tomb.

A correspondent who has just visited the tomb of the famous Li Hung Chang says that the great Mandarin's coffin is in a mausoleum shaped like a temple, over the door of which is the inscription, "He moved Heaven and overturned the Earth." The coffin itself is covered with a magnificent piece of tapestry on which these words are embroidered: "All countries of the earth weep for him."

SMALL TALK ON THE BOULEVARDS.

Some Theatrical Statistics.

The takings of the Paris theatres and music-halls in 1902 amounted to 37,293,000 francs (writes the Paris Correspondent of *The Sketch*). This is not a brilliant record, and, in the main, it is the music-halls that have done the best business. The Opéra heads the list with 3,092,000 francs, followed by the Français with 2,170,000, and the Opéra-Comique is third, with 2,112,000. Compare with these figures, for the most ultra-cultured city in Europe, the fact that Barnum and Bailey's, in the ten weeks they were open, took 1,642,566 francs. Sarah Bernhardt comes out better than I should have thought, on account of her long absences, with 1,038,000 francs; Réjane, at the Vaudeville, with 950,000 francs; while Guitry, who was open at the Renaissance only a few weeks, realised 650,000. With the halls, the Folies-Bergères is, as usual, first with 1,343,000; Olympia reached 987,000. The Casino de Paris has evidently seen its day, for it admits only 178,000; the Nouveau, where the "Cake Walk" craze came from, practically doubled the returns of any other circus, with 702,000 francs. The Moulin Rouge is down for only the remarkably small sum of 324,000. Scanning through the long list, it is easy to see the justice of the theatrical managers' plaint that they are ruined by the artistic cabarets. These little places take from £9000 to £4000 a-year, and their expenses are nil.

Dust to be Exterminated.

The fact that the weather is cold, windy, and wet seems to have induced the Parisian to speculate cheerfully as to the best way to lay the dust in the days of the Canicule. Most are in favour of the Monte Carlo system, which has long been in vogue in many parts of France. It consists of tarring a macadam road and then throwing on sand. The success has been noticeable, although it is bad for horses in wet weather. This for the country. The Municipal Council of Paris contemplates a revolution in dust-laying without creating mud. Dion-Bouton have submitted a motor water-tank for which the firm claim much, and with my own eyes I have seen that they have made a huge stride in advance. The motor is guaranteed for a regular speed of four kilomètres the hour. Two tons of water are stored in the tank, and the water, in the form of a thick mist, moistens seven square mètres. The experts admit that one of these motor water-machines can do the work of thirteen of the ordinary carts. They will probably be experimented with in the less-congested thoroughfares this summer.

Loubet's Algerian Voyage.

The resignation of the Governor-General of Algeria, M. Revoil, on the eve of the President's visit, and the continued attack of the former's uncle on the family of M. Combes, the Prime Minister, in connection with blackmailing the Chartreuse monks, have thrown a gloom over the whole affair. M. André Vervoort, whose name is prominently used, is the brother-in-law of Henri Rochefort. He has had a varied career. He edited *Le Jour*, and Rochefort for nothing wrote "Les Aventures de ma Vie" for it. His ambition was his doom. He put up for the Municipal Council as a stepping-stone towards the Chambre des Députés. Every Socialist in Paris rose against him, and he was driven out of public life, and his paper followed him. Latterly his name appeared as Editor-in-Chief of the *Soir*, a journal of flickering fortunes. How the scandal will end it is difficult to say, but the Catholics will take their revenge if they have a chance.

Will Sarah Risk It?

All Paris is asking whether her Monte Carlo success will induce Sarah Bernhardt to break into light comedy. Her creation of the principal rôle in the mythological farce "Bohèmes" was a revelation, and enthusiasts can see no bounds to probabilities. After all, why not? M. "Heureuse" is playing a very light rôle. The house is packed, which is more than can be said for plays in greyer tint. Sarah has paid bitterly for the too sombre series of creations. There is no necessity for a Palais-Royal or Nouveautés scare farce; but a delightful light comedy by a Feydeau, a Hennequin, or a Bisson would draw all Paris.

The Popularity of Wealth.

The Grand Prix de Paris is this year run on the first Sunday in June, and when that race is over there is only the shutters to be put up. This year an attempt by the tradespeople is contemplated to keep the wealthy in Paris. The idea of fêtes is pretty, but I have reason to believe that no money is forthcoming. The seaside towns, on their side, will commence the season with fêtes weeks earlier than usual. Their fear is that the automobile world will emigrate to Ireland for the Gordon Bennett Cup, and spend the holiday season in wandering over the United Kingdom. Not many know that it is absolutely forbidden in the *New York Herald* to publish the name of Gordon Bennett. Hence it is known as the International Cup.



MIDLE. LIANE DE PUGY, THE CELEBRATED FRENCH DANCER.

Photograph by W. and D. Downey, Ebury Street, S.W.



THE STAGE FROM THE STALLS.

BY E. F. S.

("Monocle.")

"THE VIKINGS."

MISS ELLEN TERRY has a courage that deserves success in beginning her campaign at the Imperial Theatre with a play by Ibsen. No modern artist—to use the word widely—has aroused greater bitterness of feeling than the Scandinavian dramatist. Wagner, Zola, Whistler, Burne-Jones, Walt Whitman—the last-named, perhaps, is a little out of this class—Oscar Wilde, Swinburne, and others have caused a blind wrath such as Ibsen has excited, but not, I think, in quite such an intense degree. It is certain that the chance of success of "The Vikings" would be enormously increased if the authorship were a secret, and, should it achieve a moderate triumph, the evidence of inherent power will be very great. The humour is that in the grim tragedy there is nothing to suggest the style or technique, the philosophy or moral system, peculiar to the author of "Hedda Gabler." Perhaps there are people who could have discovered the authorship of "The Vikings" from the implicit evidence, but only then, I believe, if capable of reading it easily in the original. I, at least, will admit humbly that I see nothing in it suggestive of the dramatist to whom we owe the dozen Ibsen plays presented in London, nor, indeed, much that is indicative of that far nobler tragedy, "The Pretenders," the grandeur and beauty of which would stagger some of the fiercest opponents of the Scandinavian drama. "The Vikings," as a matter of fact, is a powerful tragedy not highly individualised, so far as the author is concerned. Macaulay's schoolboy would know the sources from which the central idea and some of the episodes are taken, even if he could not fully appreciate several interesting hints of the early law, or custom rather than law, which appear in it. The story is somewhat complex, and, for tragedy, many of the ideas are strange; the technique shows a freedom from traditional ideas of treatment not noticeable in some of the greatest Ibsen plays.

One has to dive a little and think a little ere arriving at the human story underlying the curious picture of the manners, customs, and ideas of the mighty Northern warriors. Even an acquaintance with Brünhilde, as handled by Wagner in his amazing music-drama, does not enable one quickly to perceive the nobility of character inherent but obscure in Hiördis, the apparently cruel, revengeful, and bloodthirsty heroine of the grim tragedy. Yet it is easy to see and feel moved by the intense pathos of the part of Ormulf, the old warrior, who bears his calamities with almost more than mortal fortitude. The character of Sigurd stands out as a great creation, though, by what appears to me bad stage-craft, the explanation of much of his conduct is kept back for a *coup de théâtre* at the end of the play. Possibly, indeed, Ibsen used the idea in the last Act of Sigurd's conversion to Christianity merely for stage effect, and does not intend to suggest that the difference between his conduct and attitude and that of the others is due to his having accepted the tender teachings of Christ in place of the bloody creed of the terrible gods of his people. One prefers to think that, with an excess of reticence, the dramatist has been quietly working out this idea of the power of Christianity.

Although I would gladly speak of nothing save the nobler aspect of the tragedy, I cannot help feeling that its very truthfulness is some bar to full enjoyment of it. A similar story with the same *dramatis personæ* might have touched us more closely if the characters, like the persons in nine historical plays out of ten, had been the men and women of the writer's time and country masquerading. On the other hand, one comes on passages, as in the scenes between Dagny and her foster-sister, which go straight to the heart. And yet, again, it is deeply interesting to have real human creatures actuated by ideas of vengeance, punishment, and honour with which we cannot sympathise working out before us a strong tragedy firmly founded on those ideas so alien to our own. Although in "The Vikings" the full power of the author is not shown, and the technique at times seems a little clumsy, one recognises the curious force and individuality that prove him to be essentially a dramatist who, even in handling such a subject, works out his scheme through the nature of his creatures. When one compares his treatment with that of Wagner when handling part of his subject, or with that of other workers in the field, the fact becomes noteworthy that, though his characters act on the belief of the wilful interference in and with their lives of various personifications of Fate, Ibsen puts all this aside and develops everything through character. With less than the prodigious skill shown in "Rosmersholm," and less than the smaller skill evident in "When We Dead Awaken," and yet with remarkable ability, the dramatist builds up before our eyes an antecedent story. Half the play has happened ere it begins,

yet not the least thrilling moments are those in which we learn the love-story of Sigurd and Gunnar—the Scandinavian David and Jonathan—and Dagny and Hiördis, and notice the tragic criss-cross that wrecks four lives by giving each man and maid a wrong mate, with the consequence that the two noblest can find no issue save death from an appalling situation.

It is very difficult to form any comparative view of the actual force of the tragedy, since we have little acquaintance with tragedy on our stage, save with the tragedies of Shakspeare, a part of several of which we know very well. As a rule, alas, tragedies prove to be melodramas in disguise. I am not leaving out of account the tragedies of Mr. Stephen Phillips, which, however, are not what one may call tragedies of character, but of external influence. The absolute value seems to me very high, although one has the great disadvantage of only knowing the work through a translation. If there still exists a public for serious drama, a perusal in book-form of the play, admirably rendered into English by Mr. Archer, and published by Mr. Heinemann, should tempt it to the Imperial, where it will be rewarded by a work strongly dramatic, rich in action, and dignified in idea. There may be a certain harshness in it and lack of tender tones; but, above all, it is interesting, even thrilling, to those with the imagination necessary to enable them to sympathise with creatures strangely human and inhuman, who, despite all their fantastic ideas, are intensely natural.

And, apart from the play, this production is interesting in view of the fact that Miss Terry has given to Mr. Gordon Craig an opportunity on a larger scale than he has yet had of putting into practice the theories about stage lighting and mounting which have made his reputation. The four Acts are all beautifully mounted, and produce a weirdness of effect which is admirably suited to the characteristics of the play: an effect due partly to the lighting of the stage exclusively from the top, which, though it has the disadvantage of leaving the faces of the players too often in darkness, gets rid of the violently artificial glare of the footlights; and partly to the use of vague and nebulous backgrounds which suggest as nothing else can illimitable space. And when the scene is an interior, as is the scene of the second Act, Mr. Craig's method of carrying all the lines of the scenery up without any interruption till they disappear somewhere in the roof gives a peculiarly impressive air of grandeur. The scenery is in every way worthy of the play, and admirably fulfils the function of scenery in suggesting the atmosphere in which the characters move. We know that Mr. Craig appears to think that it should do more, and be in itself a self-contained picture; whether it ought to be, or in this case is, this, is a question of more doubt. He certainly does go rather far in subordinating the human faces to the general effect, and as we have come to see, primarily, a drama in appropriate surroundings, we are inclined to resent the presentation of surroundings even though accompanied by appropriate drama.

To a certain extent, Miss Terry has sacrificed herself in order to give others a chance, and she confessed to having felt some anxiety as to the result. I trust that the experiment will be justified by success; for though it is in the portrayal of lightness and humour that she is seen at her best, yet her study of the extremely complicated character of Hiördis has many points of interest, and she plays at times with more tragic power than one would have expected from her. On the first-night she was obviously much affected both by the cares of management and by the warmth of her reception, and played under difficulties which have, no doubt, by this time disappeared; but that fact only seemed to increase the sympathy and goodwill of the audience, who welcomed back the ever-popular favourite with enthusiasm. Miss Hutin Britton, who played Dagny with sincerity and power, is a clever young actress and made a most promising first appearance in London. The men all responded admirably to the calls made upon them. Mr. Oscar Asche as Sigurd the Strong, the rugged warrior with the generous and tender heart, marked excellently the contrast of his own character with that of the passionate and scornful Hiördis, and Mr. Hubert Carter as Gunnar was equally successful; but perhaps the most remarkable piece of acting of the evening was that of Mr. Holman Clark as the proud old patriarch, Ormulf, nobly restoring her child to the woman who had insulted him, and finding that, through her, he has lost the last and the dearest of his sons. Mr. Conway Tearle made quite a "hit" as that son in the scene in which he is infuriated by Hiördis and stalks out flinging defiance at the reviler of his family.



A NEW PORTRAIT OF MADAME PATTI.

Photograph by Mendelssohn, Pembridge Crescent, W.

THE HOMES AND HAUNTS OF WILLIAM COWPER.

BORN NOV. 26, 1731. DIED APRIL 25, 1800.



COWPER HOUSE, OLNEY, NORTH BUCKS.
THE POET RESIDED HERE FOR NINETEEN YEARS.



COWPER DAY AT OLNEY.



HOCKEREGE WOODS: A SCENE NEAR COWPER'S BIRTHPLACE.

Photographs by J. T. Newman, Berkhamsted.



THE VICARAGE, OLNEY,
THE RESIDENCE AT VARIOUS TIMES OF NEWTON, COWPER, SCOTT, AND GAUNTLETT.



COWPER'S SUMMER-HOUSE,
IN WHICH SEVERAL OF HIS POEMS WERE WRITTEN.

Scenes must be beautiful which daily viewed
Please daily, and whose novelty survives
Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years.
—COWPER.

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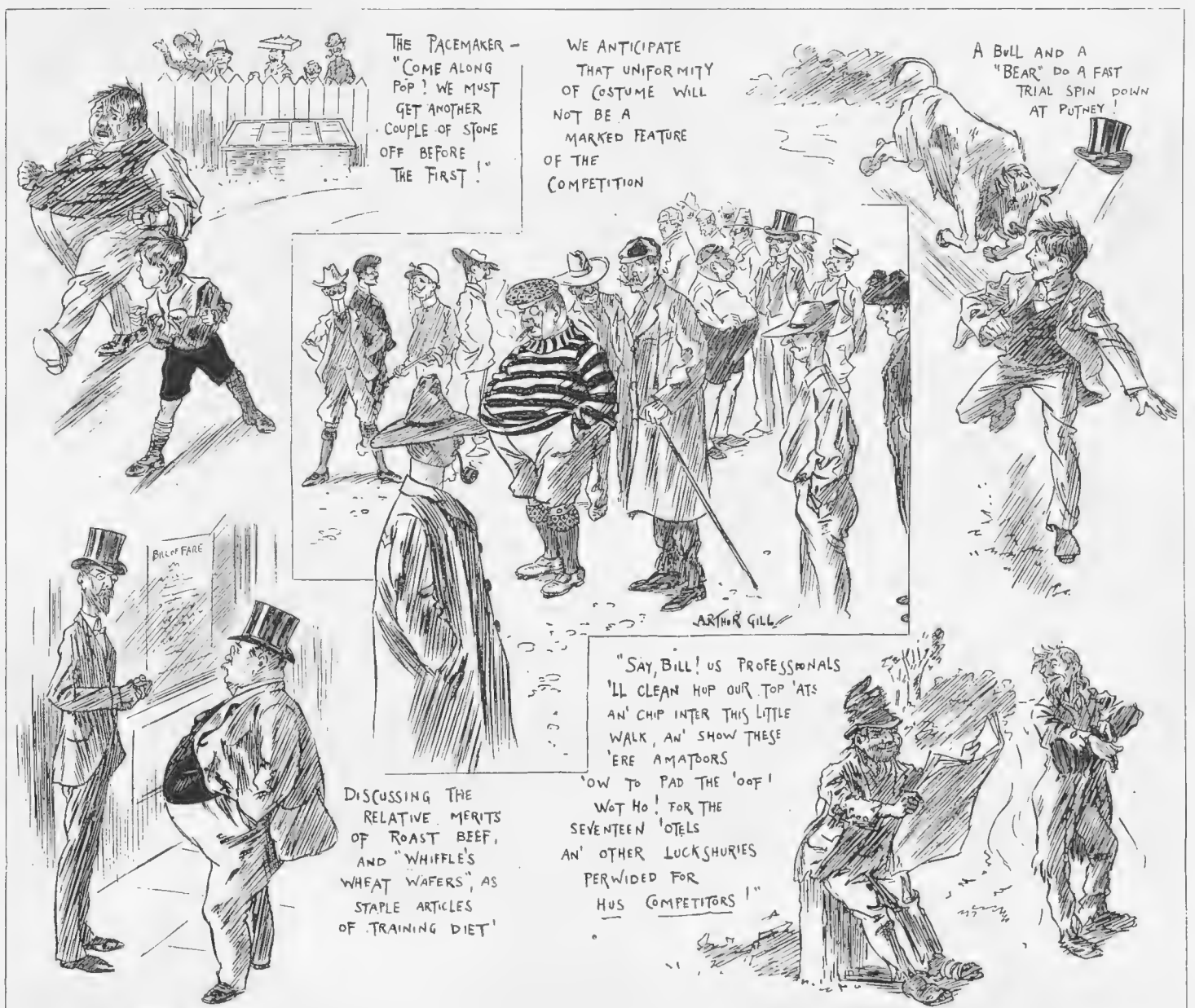
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ADVICE TO MOTORISTS.

[DRAWN BY STARR WOOD.]

Don't, when paying a call, leave your young sister in the car alone.



[DRAWN BY ARTHUR GILL.]

THE STOCK EXCHANGE WALK TO BRIGHTON: TRAINING NOTES AND ANTICIPATIONS.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

MR. J. M. RIGG, who was a constant contributor to the "Dictionary of National Biography" and edited some of the Selden Society's publications, has been engaged for many months on a translation of Boccaccio's "Decameron." It is now issued in two substantial volumes (with full-page illustrations by M. Louis Chalon) by Mr. A. H. Bullen. Of Mr. John Payne's version, which has hitherto held the field, Mr. Rigg remarks: "Those least inclined to disparage its merits may deem its style too archaic and stilted adequately to render the vigour and vivacity of the original. Accordingly, in the present version an attempt has been made to hit the mean between archaism and modernism, and to secure as much freedom and spirit as is compatible with substantial accuracy." Mr. Rigg is a son of the Rev. Dr. J. H. Rigg, the eminent Wesleyan minister.

Max O'Rell has written a new book, "Rambles in Womanland," which will be published shortly by Messrs. Chatto and Windus. His previous essays in this kind have been very well received, more than ten thousand copies having been sold.

It is good news that Messrs. Macmillan are to add to their attractive *éditions de luxe* the works of Matthew Arnold. I understand that, by special arrangements with other publishers, they will be able to issue a complete edition. There is now a good market for such books—the *édition de luxe* of Walter Pater having been exceptionally successful in a successful series.

The well-known writer of books for the young, Arabella Buckley, is a sister of Mr. Justice Buckley, whose pronouncements have recently attracted great attention. I understand that in future Messrs. Macmillan will publish nearly all her books.

The little Memoir of John Forster, "by One of his Friends," published by Messrs. Chapman and Hall, is welcome in spite of its obvious shortcomings. There is no attempt to disguise the fact that it is written by Mr. Percy Fitzgerald. Mr. Fitzgerald's literary position is pretty well fixed, and I do not attempt to discuss it. With all their defects, his books are interesting, and some of them cannot safely be overlooked by the literary student. It is strange indeed that so great a biographer as John Forster should have been left so long uncommemorated. With the exception of the admirable article in the *Newcastle Chronicle*, which has been reprinted in various forms, there is no full sketch of his career. Yet his connection with Victorian literature was so close, his own works, with all deductions, are so valuable, and the materials he left so abundant, that a well-executed

Life would have been of permanent value. Mr. Fitzgerald makes no attempt at a complete chronicle. He says little or nothing about Forster's long labour on the *Examiner* and his brief connection with the *Daily News*. In the Life of Professor Henry Morley will be found much interesting matter about Forster and the *Examiner*. The *Examiner* lived and had a considerable literary influence when the circulation was only one hundred copies a week!

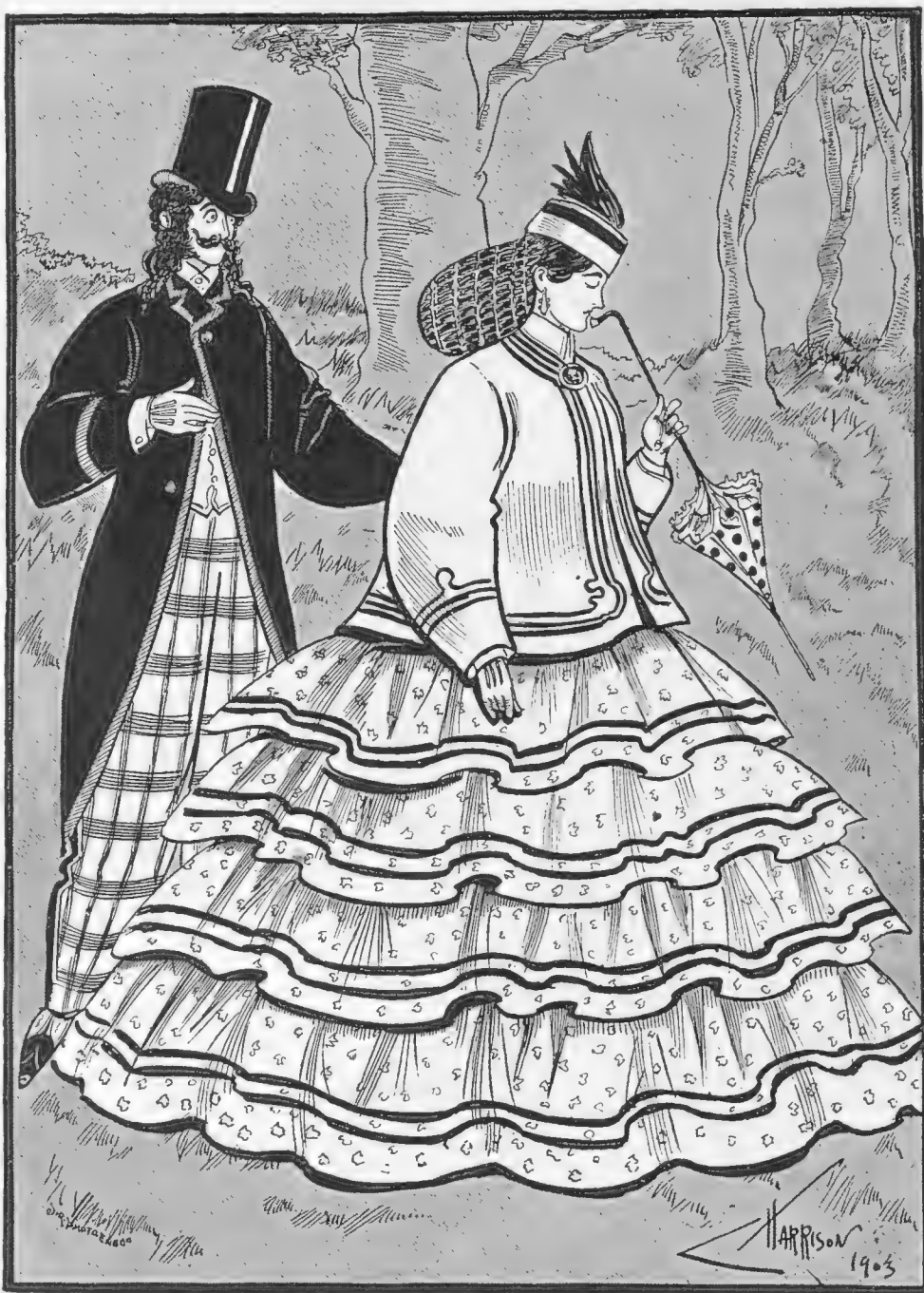
Mr. Fitzgerald gives just praise to Forster's "Life of Dickens"—a book which has had much less than justice of late. Much complaint has been made of the place Forster gives to his own friendship with Dickens. James Payn, who knew the circumstances well, vindicated Forster at the time, and said that Dickens once signed a letter to Payn "John Forster." He added an apologetic postscript, saying that he thought so constantly about Forster that their individualities were almost merged. But the best proof of the excellence of Forster's work is to be found in the biographies that have succeeded it. Some day—I do not desire it—a full and true biography of Dickens will be written. There are materials. Then it will be seen that Forster had good reason for his omissions.

John Forster had his love affairs, like other men, though he was so long a bachelor. He was actually engaged to "L. E. L." (Letitia Landon), whose married life proved so tragical. He became attached to another lady, who had several suitors of distinction, but she refused him. Ultimately, to everyone's astonishment, he married the widow of Henry Colburn, the publisher. Mr. Fitzgerald thinks that the marriage was fairly successful. Forster was obstreperous, and his wife one of the sweetest of women. During his last years Forster

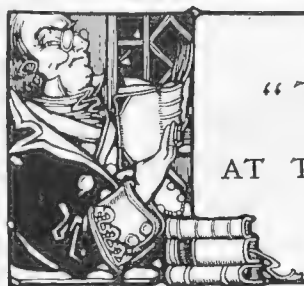
suffered terribly from gout on the chest. He had days and nights of frightful coughing, with other maladies of the most painful kind. His temper was often ruffled, but Mrs. Forster persistently believed in the dual nature of her tempestuous mate. "She knew well that not he, but his malady was responsible."

Much has been said of the egotism of Dickens. I think it worth while to quote the testimony of the late Sir Frederick Pollock, who knew what he was talking about: "No one could be more free from egotism than Dickens was. He never talked about himself or his books, and was thus in great contrast with Thackeray, who, after he became famous, liked no subject so well."

O. O.

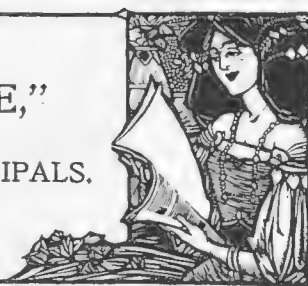


"POPPING THE QUESTION."—III. THE CRINOLINE AND STOVE-PIPE HAT ERA.



"THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE,"
AT THE HAYMARKET: SOME OF THE PRINCIPALS.

Photographs by Bassano, Old Bond Street, W



MR. ERIC LEWIS AS CANTON.

"THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE,"
AT THE HAYMARKET.



LOVEWELL (MR. C. M. HALLARD) WHISPERS WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO
FANNY (MISS JESSIE BATEMAN), HIS CLANDESTINE BRIDE.

"THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE,"
AT THE HAYMARKET.



LORD OGLEBY (MR. CYRIL MAUDE) IS BOLSTERED UP FOR THE DAY BY
BRUSH (MR. A. E. MATTHEWS) AND CANTON.

"THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE,"
AT THE HAYMARKET.



MISS VIOLET DARRELL AS BETTY.



MISS BEATRICE FERRAR AS MISS STERLING.



MR. ALLAN AYNESWORTH AS SIR JOHN MELVILLE.



MR. LIONEL RIGNOLD AS STERLING.

FOUR NEW BOOKS.

"THE BOOK OF MONTHS."By E. F. BENSON.
(Heinemann. 6s.)

The sensitive critic approaches Mr. Benson's new book with a certain amount of diffidence. Up to the end of April, he has been charmed, amused, convinced. With the advent of May, however, there comes to him a sneaking suspicion that the author, after all, is merely spinning a yarn instead of adhering to his purpose of setting down the impressions of a year just as they occurred to him. For the chapter headed "May" introduces us to one Margery, an ideal woman with whom the writer fell in love, only to see her married to his dearest chum. The story of Margery and Dick is beautifully told—so beautifully that the critic is inclined to feel that it should never have been told at all. "Now this 'Book of Months' is almost certainly worth nothing, anyhow, and I take this opportunity to inform the critics so, in case (as is not likely) they have the slightest doubt about it. But, if they and I are wrong, it will be because we have both overlooked the possible value of a true document—true, that is, as far as I personally am able to make it true." Thus Mr. Benson in his opening chapter, and yet one is left hoping that the events of May and June are mere fiction. The worst of it is that the author keeps reminding us of Margery, even to the extent of introducing her "double," whom he eventually marries. "The Book of Months," we venture to predict, will be a sore puzzle to everyone outside Mr. Benson's intimate circle of acquaintances. For all that, there is excellent writing in the volume, and some artistic observations of people and places. "Snow over all, and it is summer. Frost binds the icy fields, and in my heart every nightingale in the world makes melody. The bare trees are hung with icicles, and a shrill wind whistles through them; yet to me they are the green habitations of mating birds, and in the hedgerows, with their mask of snow where the wind has drifted it, are the nests of the hedge-sparrows with the blue eggs that reflect the skies of April."

"HIS GRACE'S GRACE."By C. RANGER GULL.
(Greening. 6s.)

Mr. Ranger Gull has yet to find his level. At one time an ardent disciple in the school of Oscar Wilde, he has disported himself under the flags of various modern writers until, with "His Grace's Grace," we find him striking an unhappy medium between Mr. Cotsford Dick and Miss Braddon. In other words, he is at one time ultra-epigrammatic, and at another ultra-sentimental. Of the two styles, he is the more successful in the sentimental. The concluding chapters of the story are quite well done, and Mr. Gull, if he cultivates this line sufficiently, may yet find himself in the snug haven of the popular novelist. As an epigrammatist, on the other hand, he is tiresome to a degree. Here are some samples of his quality: "People who smoke cigarettes are sometimes different. All men who smoke cigars are alike." "Many unsuccessful ordination candidates go upon the stage, and all unfrocked priests do." (Adds the author: "There was a general laugh at this.") "Modern literary life might be summed up like the parts of an irregular verb—write, writer, writted!" Thus does Mr. Gull pop in his plums—or rather, currants—at inartistic intervals. The novel, as a whole, however, is well-constructed and brightly written. The reader will only have himself to blame if he does not get some very hearty laughs out of the poor country parson with a passion to see Boulogne before he dies, and the rustic gardener with the wonderful cure for indigestion.

"THE GAP IN THE GARDEN."By VANDA WATHEN-BARTLETT.
(Lane. 6s.)

The Gap in the Garden was made by a very wilful young woman, who, like most of the characters in the book, is a qualified candidate for Bedlam. Julian, or, more prosaically, Julianna Mildmay of Mildmay, cut down certain trees in the belt encircling her home. Her sister Bridget approved—"It was just the one thing necessary to complete our garden's beauty." Miss Mildmay, the girls' aunt, "in helpless but not speechless indignation," prophesied, "It will be the death of all the roses!" "It will let God into this shut-in garden," had retorted Julian. . . . "My Lord is a God of sweet, fierce winds and mighty thunders, He is the stern Jehovah of the Jews, a remorseless Juggernaut, no Jason, but a Hercules. . . . He shall sweep the keen revivment of His strength into this stuffy garden"—and so on and so on. Julian and Biddy, joint owners of Mildmay until the marriage of one of them, have the misfortune not only to make a Gap in the Garden, but to fall in love with their cousin, to whom the property must eventually pass. Hence many neurotic manifestations, recounted in a style that betrays at once the author's acquaintance with Meredith and her inability to handle his weapons. The story of introspection and renunciation moves us little, but the psychological antics of Julianna

and her "Uncle Theo"—a brain-sick recluse who has, unfortunately, been the girl's instructor—may divert the healthy-minded reader who has patience to follow them. When Theo Kelvin solemnly announces to Julian that, although he is in no way related to her, she is his daughter because he willed it so before she saw the light, we begin to understand exactly where we are in this book, and can read on in a spirit of becoming levity. After this and certain hypnotic suggestions, we know we are in the region of the fourth dimension, and even the speech of Tammias, the preposterous Scotch gardener, fits into the scheme, for Tammias, asked how long a certain state of things has endured, replies, "Since the morn only." Now "the morn" in Scots means "to-morrow." Whence the transcendentalism of Tammias's remark is obvious. So, too, Tammias's wife, Kirsteen, says, "An' is it joy that I see in your een the morn?"—a greeting that rivals the ancient subtlety of Joey the Clown.

"NEAR THE TSAR, NEAR DEATH."By FRED. WHISHAW.
(Chatto and Windus. 6s.)

Under an unnecessarily melodramatic title, Mr. Fred. Whishaw tells the oft-told story of the tragedy that forms the greatest blot upon the escutcheon of Peter, Emperor of All the Russias, called "the Great," the notorious clearing of the horizon by the murder of the weakling Tsarevitch. In his book we see Peter the great barbarian rather than the great reformer, Peter the libertine, the drunkard, and the boor, the savage "father" of a savage people; and, in sharp contrast, his son Alexis, the thorn in the flesh, the inheritor of many of his father's vices, and a pitiful coward to boot. Mr. Whishaw has obviously made a commendably careful study of his subject, and conforms closely, almost minutely, to history; but he contrives, nevertheless, to imbue his characters with life, a virtue too seldom found in the novel in which fact and fiction are combined. He is, of course, chiefly concerned with Peter and Alexis, but he also, of necessity, introduces a number of others; whose deeds have come down to us—amongst them the designing courtesan, Euphrosyne, who played so important and dastardly a part in the life of the unfortunate Tsarevitch; Menshikof, Peter's friend and adviser; and Tolstoy, the chief sleuth-hound deputed to hunt down the son when he fled from the wrath of his father. It says much for Mr. Whishaw that they are all much more than puppets wearing others' clothes and bearing others' names. The essential love-interest is supplied by Boris von Arenburg, companion to the Tsarevitch, and Nadia Kostigin, daughter of the manor-lord Kostigin, "even in those days of trodden serfs and ignorant, brutal masters, one of the worst of his type." Nadia is pestered by the amorous attentions of the Tsar, and her endeavours to escape from him form the basis of a sub-plot by which the story is materially strengthened. Peter and Alexis, however, are the characters upon which the attention is fixed, and it is their power to hold the interest that will make the popularity of this work of fiction that is three parts fact.

ON THE TABLE.

"The Indiscretion of Gladys." By Lucas Cleve. (Long. 6s.)—A modern novel.**"The Man with the Wooden Face."** By Mrs. Fred Reynolds. (Hutchinson. 6s.)—A story with a little music-teacher for its heroine.**"The Essays of David Hume."** (Grant Richards. 1s.)—The latest addition to "The World's Classics" Series.**"The Book of Snobs."** By William Makepeace Thackeray. (Dent. 3s.)—One of the thirty volumes of "The Prose Works of William Thackeray" which Mr. C. E. Brock is illustrating for Messrs. Dent.**"The Wizard's Aunt."** By Janet Laing. (Dent. 4s. 6d.)—In spite of its weird title, this is not a tale of witchcraft, but a story of modern times, in which the author introduces us to no less than four heroines.**"Grace Marlow."** By Joseph Clayton. (Brown, Langham, and Co.)—A novel in which the Salvation Army plays a conspicuous part.

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NEWSPAPER HEADINGS.

AS INTERPRETED BY JOHN HASSALL.



LONDON STREET STUDIES.

BY EDWARD KING.



X.—OUT-PATIENTS.



A COMMONPLACE JEST.

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM.

I.

THE hoarse striking of a distant clock broke in upon his meditations. Nine o'clock! His day of slavery had commenced. He laid down the book upon the wooden stall before which it was his custom to linger for a minute or two most mornings. Something had lodged in his throat; it might have been a sob! He had been so absorbed that he had forgotten where he stood, whither he was bound. It all came back to him with such grim yet facile insistence. London Bridge Station, disgorging its crowd of suburban business-men, the heavy atmosphere of Bermondsey down the steps below—Bermondsey, with its nauseous odours, its smoke-stained warehouses, in one of which his own stool was awaiting him. It was disillusion, complete, entire—a veritable mud-bath after the breath of roses.

For this book had spoken of very different things. It had spoken of heather-crowned hills, of gorse-bushes yellow with sprinkled gold; of a west wind, fragrant, melodious in the pines; of flower-wreathed hedges and blossoming trees; of the song of birds and the glad murmuring of insects. A dull flush stained his sallow cheeks. For once he lost his stoop and stood almost upright. It was the one moment of inspiration which seems to be the heritage even of the very meanest creature who ever walks the earth. The spirit of rebellion leaped up in him like a flame. His way lay, as it had ever done, down those fateful steps. Nine o'clock had struck, and nine o'clock was his hour. He ignored it. He crossed the station-yard and entered the booking-hall.

"Then you won't tell me?"

"Won't tell you what?"

"Why you came here, in those clothes, and with no luggage. You must have some friends in Lidford."

He shook his head. "I never heard of the place before," he assured her. "I picked the name out from the time-table. It sounded like the country, and it was a long way off."

She looked at him with incredulity plainly written in her sedate, beautiful face. "Of course," she murmured, making a pretence at rising, "if you don't want to tell me——"

"Please don't go!" he interrupted, in alarm. "It is the truth, really! I know no one here. I only wanted to get away."

"To get away," she repeated, thoughtfully. "Do you mean that you have been doing something wrong?"

"Something wrong!" He repeated the words vaguely, with his eyes fixed upon her all the time. She had risen and was looking at him seriously. Her eyes were blue—such a wonderful blue, like the sky which he had been watching lazily all the afternoon, lying on his back in the deep, cool grass; and her hair—Ah, there was nothing which he had seen so beautiful as that! Then, warned by her obvious gravity, he hastened to reassure her.

"No," he declared, "I have done nothing wrong. I have run away from my work, that is all. I read in a book this morning of the country, of the sunshine, and the wind, and the birds, and—all this." He waved his arm aimlessly about. "I had to come—I couldn't help it."

"You have come from London—here?" she exclaimed.

"Yes!"

"And your luggage?"

"I brought none."

"And your hat?"

"I threw it away. It was a very old, shiny, silk hat, with ink on the bare places. What would you have thought of me wandering about the fields in such a thing? It is bad enough as I am."

He glanced disparagingly down at his shabby black clothes and dark trousers, frayed at the ends, but carefully pressed and cleaned. She shook her head. She was a little bewildered. "I am sure that your clothes are very nice," she said, "and you were wrong to throw away your hat. What are you going to do without one?"

"I have no idea," he answered. "But, then, I have no idea what I am going to do with myself, so it really doesn't matter, does it?"

"I think," she said, deliberately, "that you are the very queerest person I ever met. Do go on talking to me! Tell me some more about—yourself."

"There is nothing interesting to tell," he assured her, a little wearily.

"I would rather listen to you. Tell me some more about the birds."

She shook her head impatiently.

"What is your name, please?" she asked.

"Stephen Marwood," he answered. "I am an orphan, and a clerk in a warehouse. I get twenty-five shillings a-week, and I add up figures and make out invoices from nine till six in a cellar with the gas burning all the time. I live in a long, ugly street, surrounded by miles of other streets. I am just one of a million. I work and I sleep, and I work again, and all the time my lungs are choked with fog and smoke and bad smells."

"It doesn't sound nice," she admitted.

"It isn't!" he assured her.

"And yet," she added, with a little, wistful sigh, "it is London."

"It is certainly London," he declared. "It might as well be hell."

She looked at him wonderingly. After all, he must be a little mad.

"And where," she asked, reverting once more to the practical, "are you going to sleep?"

"I don't know," he answered, dreamily, "and I don't care if only I can smell this honeysuckle all night."

"And your tea and supper?" she asked, scornfully. "Will the scent of the honeysuckle satisfy your hunger as well?"

He closed his eyes for a moment. Removed from all distractions, he was forced to admit that he was hungry. "I shall go down to the inn," he decided. "I suppose there is an inn here? But you?"

She pointed downwards to where the grey smoke rose in a straight, thin line from a red-tiled cottage. "There is no inn," she told him, "but my aunt will get you some tea, if you like. We often have parties."

"We will have it together, then," he begged, eagerly.

"Perhaps," she answered, laughing.

A month afterwards, they met almost in the same place.

"Let us climb to the top and watch the reapers," he begged. "There is a field on the other side where the poppies are all in clusters, like spots of blood in a waving, yellow sea. I was watching them all this morning. By to-morrow they will be gone. The men seem to creep like insects, but all the time the grain falls."

She sighed. She was dressed in black. She looked thin and there were tears in her eyes. But more wonderful still was the change in him. He carried himself like a man; a healthy tan had burnt his cheeks, his eyes were bright with health. Even his voice had acquired a new firmness. The drudge was no more. The yoke of his servitude was cast aside. To-morrow he might starve. His small savings, in fact, were almost spent. To-day, at least, he was a man.

"What strange fancies you have!" she declared. "The farmers hate the poppies, and these overgrown hedges which you admire so much ought all to be cut down and trimmed."

He laughed. "Give me the honeysuckle and the creepers," he declared. "I have seen enough of the ugly and the useful to last me all my life. Come, it is only a few steps further. Give me your hand."

Breathless, they reached the summit of the hill and the shelter of the little grove of pine-trees. She sat down with her back to the trunk of one of them. He threw himself by her side. Below them, the slumbering landscape, warm and mellow in the afternoon sunshine, and in their faces the west wind.

"I believe in Heaven," he murmured. "I have found it."

A delight, almost a fervour, was in his eyes as they wandered on and on to where the limits of his vision ended in a faint blue mist. She looked at him as one who seeks to read a book written in a strange language.

"I do not understand," she said. "It is beautiful here, I know, because everyone says so, and it is pleasant to sit and watch it all for a while. But I have sat here all my life, and I am weary of it."

"Weary!" he repeated, in amazement. "Weary of this country, of this life!"

"Sick to death of it!" she answered, with a vigour which was almost bluntness. "Who can sit and look at one picture all their lives, however beautiful? The fields and the hedges change only from winter to summer, from summer to winter. And the people change never."

He pointed to the little graveyard away in the valley. "It is not true," he declared. "They have their joys and their sorrows also. There was merriment enough at the harvest-home the other day, and the whole village wept over that last little mound in the churchyard."

She shook her head impatiently. A strand or two of her hair was loosened; the sun flecked it with gold. He realised then that she was beautiful. She sat there like a self-enthroned goddess.

"The people are all very dull and very ignorant," she said. "Their lives are narrow; they sleep and they eat, and they die—but they do not live. They never live."

He was alarmed. "Go on," he said, in a low tone. "You have something in your mind?"

"It is true," she admitted. "While Aunt was alive, I was a prisoner. Now, I am free. I want to escape."

"Escape—from here?" he murmured. "Why, this is Paradise!"

She laughed softly, but with her mirth was mingled a subtle note of mockery. "You are a very foolish person," she said. "You do not know what ambition is. I do not want to sit upon the banks all my life."

"There are many who drown," he murmured.

"I will take the risk," she answered.

All the joy and freshness seemed to fade away from his face. Something of the old haggard despair came back to him. This was the end, then, of all his dreams. "Yesterday," he said, in a low tone, "I walked to Market Deening. I got a situation with Sheppards', the auctioneers, and Mrs. Green, in the village, has promised me a room."

Her lips curled a little. "If it satisfies you—," she began.

He interrupted her. "Don't mock me!" he cried, roughly. "Nothing satisfies me if you go away. You know that."

advice and bulbs, and the promise of seeds. He even ventured to discuss the crops with the farmers whom he met on the way. He remembered that he had once, before the evil days, called himself a Christian, and one Sunday morning he found his way to the village church. He came out with a curious sense of removal from that part of his life which was still something of a nightmare to him. Henceforth the memory of it never troubled him. He had come into real and intimate kinship with these simple folk amongst whom chance had brought him.

And then her letters ceased. He wrote and wrote again, but there came no reply. He bore it as well as he could, and then, one day, a chance remark brought the stinging colour into his cheeks and his heart for a moment stood still. He applied for leave of absence and went to London.

The address which she had given him was 127, West Street, Edgware Road. But when he reached it he felt again for the letter in his pocket. No. 127 was a public-house. Yet that was the number at the head of her letter. He pushed open the swing-doors and entered.

There was a smell of stale beer and fresh sawdust. An unwholesome-looking youth, collarless and unwashed, was cleaning the stains of beer-pots from the marble-topped tables. A couple of carmen were wrangling in a corner, a dissolute-looking person in



"I believe in Heaven," he murmured. "I have found it."

[DRAWN BY OSCAR WILSON.]

"A COMMONPLACE JEST."

"That is foolish," she said, "for I am most surely going away."

"To—London?"

"Yes. I have written to my cousin there."

"It would have broken your aunt's heart," he said.

"Whilst she was alive, I obeyed her," the girl answered, defiantly.

"Now she is gone, my life is my own."

"Yes," he murmured, "yes. Our lives are all our own. See how the corn falls, Esther. . . . They have reached the last belt, and all the poppies are gone."

II.

At first she wrote to him. He carried her letters with him backwards and forwards, reading them, studying them, always treasuring them. Save only for this one sorrow, the sorrow of her absence and his constant anxiety concerning her, his life had become a joy to him. His work was simple, and he did it better than it had ever been done before. His little office was bright and clean, his window looked out upon a quaint old cobbled market-place. In front was a garden, bright even in these late autumn days with simple flowers. Backwards and forwards he walked to and from his work, and the wind and rain and sun seemed each in their turn the sweetest things he had known. He grew in stature and in breadth; the latent possibilities of his manhood asserted themselves. In the little village he became a popular person. He attempted gardening, and everyone was willing to help him with

seedy black was drinking at the counter and carrying on a desultory conversation with a young person behind the bar. Marwood addressed himself to her.

"Can you tell me if Miss Day lives here?" he asked.

The young person looked at him curiously.

"Used to!" she answered. "She's gone away now."

It was true, then. Esther had really lived in a place like this. He looked about him wonderingly, and back at the young person behind the bar, who seemed undecided whether to resent his scrutiny or to encourage him as a possible admirer.

"Can you tell me—her present address?" he asked.

The young person jerked her head towards a swing-door, leading apparently into an inner bar.

"Don't know," she said. "I dersay Mrs. Molesworth can tell you. She's in there."

Marwood pushed open the swing-door. A stout, florid woman stood behind a circular counter flanked with a gorgeous array of mirrors and glasses. She was apparently engaged in the task of turning sundry black bottles upside down and holding them up to the light to estimate their contents.

"I beg your pardon," he said. "I believe that Miss Day has been staying here. Can you give me her present address?"

The woman set down the particular bottle which she was examining and looked at him fixedly.

"And what might be your business with Miss Day?" she asked.

"My name is Marwood," he said. "I knew Miss Day down in Somerset."

The lady nodded her head vigorously. She became, if possible, a little redder in the face.

"Then all I can say is that it's a great pity you didn't keep her in Somerset," she answered. "What's the use of a girl like her, with scarcely a rag to her back, coming up here with such notions? Wouldn't do this, and wouldn't do that—as particular and finicky all the time as you please. Drat the girl, I say, niece or no niece!"

"I am sorry," Marwood said, timidly. "I dare say it was a great change for her up here. Can you tell me where I shall find her?"

"No, I cannot," the lady answered, as though incensed at the question. "And, what's more, if I could I wouldn't, and good-day to you, sir."

She swung round and disappeared through a door leading to an inner room. Marwood left the place with hot cheeks. Some shadow of the humiliation which he could well imagine had been her lot seemed also to have fallen upon him. For two days and two nights he sought her in all manner of places and thoroughfares. Then chance befriended him. She was standing beneath a lamp-post, and he was in the shadows. There was no one to see the tears which filled his eyes, to hear the sob which rose hot in his throat. She was tall and thin and pale. Her eyes were larger, there was a pinched look about her features. Her clothes were shabby. He thanked God for that. She was talking with a man—a gentleman, he seemed to be, well-dressed, good-humoured, debonair. Marwood listened.

"And how does the show go?" the man asked her.

"Oh! I am no judge," she answered, wearily. "It seems stupid enough from the wings. I am only in the chorus, you know. I have nothing to do, really."

"We are going to alter all that," the man said, swinging his cane. "I shall speak to Randall and hammer a small part out of him, somehow. But, by Jove, Miss Day, you look awfully pale!"

Then Marwood saw her stumble for a moment, as though she were dizzy. She recovered herself almost immediately.

"I am—quite well," she said. "A little tired, perhaps."

The man suddenly threw away his cigarette.

"Look here, Miss Day," he said, "you've done a very foolish thing! You've missed your luncheon. You girls are always forgetting your meals. I never do. Come along. No, I insist!"

Her faint protestations were of no avail, and Marwood felt the blood run cold in his veins, for he had seen for a second what no one can ever see and mistake—the wolfish gleam of hunger in her eyes, come and gone like a flash, but more eloquent than any spoken words. Then the restaurant doors before which they had been standing opened and they disappeared inside. Marwood waited. It was an hour before they came out. The transformation in her was amazing. The lines seemed to have been smoothed from her face; there was colour in her cheeks and light in her eyes. Marwood, who had been standing on the opposite side of the street, started to cross the way, but he was too late. Somewhat unwillingly, as it seemed to him, her companion hurried her into a hansom, and followed.

Marwood caught a glimpse of the man's face under the gas-lamp—it was sufficient. When the cab drew up before a row of flats a little west of Pall Mall, he was already turning the corner. He saw Esther alight, hold out her hand; he could see her hesitation, her reluctant footsteps. He caught the man's eager tone as he bent over her hand—

"For a moment—not more than five minutes. I must show you the little play—and I believe that the part would suit you admirably. We will keep the hansom, if you like. I will send you home."

Marwood called out, but his voice sounded weak even to himself. The door was closed.

He leaned for a few moments against the palings. He was out of breath, and to him there had been something tragic in the disappearance of those two, the man and the girl, behind that closed door. His imagination ran rife. He saw hideous things. Almost he was ready to creep away—to escape—to forget. Then, as he returned to a more sane state of mind, he saw her as she came first to him, her hands clasped behind, her head thrown back as she walked blithely through the clover-scented meadows, humming some forgotten tune. With an oath, he trod the flags and rang the bell. A liveried servant let him in and led the way towards the lift.

"Which floor, sir?" he asked.

"I want the gentleman's rooms who has just come in with the lady," Marwood answered, his hand in his pocket.

"Mr. Borrodale—fourth floor, sir," the man remarked, closing the gates of the lift.

The man-servant in plain black livery blandly denied Mr. Borrodale's presence. His coat and hat on the hall-table, however, emboldened Marwood. He pushed his way in.

"It's no use; you can't see the governor!" the man declared, angrily. "Out you go!"

The veneer of civility had departed. He attempted the bully. Marwood heard a woman's cry, and he struck the man on the mouth. Then with an oak-chair he thundered upon the closed door of the room from which the cry had come. A man swore and a woman sobbed. Marwood sent a panel crashing out of the door, which was suddenly thrown open. He caught one glimpse of her face, pale and terror-stricken, as she flitted by. He would have followed, but master and servant were too many for him. The latter struck him from

behind, and he spent the night in a hospital. When he sought her again it was in vain.

So Marwood returned to his country life and his routine work. One day, old Mr. Sheppard, his employer, called him into his private office.

"Marwood," he said, bluntly, "I am getting on in years and I want a rest. I have saved a little and I have only my daughter to think of. Will you take the business—and marry her?"

Marwood sat still and thought. He watched the dusty floor specked into gold by a long shaft of sunlight, and he saw things there which the four walls of that room had never held. Presently he looked up.

"I want a month's holiday," he said. "When I return I will answer you."

The old man grunted, but gave his consent. Once more Marwood travelled up to London and renewed his search. This time he succeeded very easily. Esther Day was well known now. Her name and her pictures were in all the papers. She was acting at the Frivoly and she had made a "hit."

He called upon her, and he felt his courage oozing away. He felt the slow dissipation of the one romance of his life as they talked together. She was well-dressed, prosperous, more beautiful than ever, with all the light smartness of the modern Londoner. To their last strange meeting she made no allusion. She gave him tea and showed him her new poodle. She talked of theatrical matters as one in the know—and to him it was jargon. When he stood up to go, he made one effort to break down the barriers which seemed to have grown up between them.

"And you have found," he asked, holding her hand for a moment, "the things you sought for?"

She laughed.

"I have learnt wisdom," she answered. "I have learnt how much to expect."

He fancied that she hurried him away. As he left the door, a brougham drove up and a young man alighted—a young man of the type he knew nothing of—immaculate in dress and person, good-looking, languid. Marwood went back to the country that night.

Yet he delayed his answer, though old Sheppard grew more and more impatient every day. Marwood passed through a curious phase of his emotional life. Mary Sheppard was pretty in her way, and waited only for him to speak. Yet he hung back with something of the feeling of a man called upon to sign his own death-warrant. An impending sense of the finality of life seemed to him to be inevitably coupled with the decision which the old man and the girl were now awaiting with almost obvious eagerness. He had no great aspirations, nothing which could rank as ambitions. Yet behind the trend of his daily life, his ordinary, well-performed tasks and simple pleasures, he felt at times the dim, unrealised presence of greater things, a more quickening and satisfying life. Sometimes, in the night, he sat up in bed and stretched out his arms—for what he scarcely knew. He wandered up on to the hilltop and watched the reapers. Some shadow of a far-distant, impossible dream seemed to still torment him with intangible and unsatisfying longings. And all the time the old man and the girl waited. In the end they had their way.

She came into his little office—a curiously incongruous presence in her fashionable clothes, bringing with her the subtle air of the City and of all those nameless things the presence of which had so estranged him on his last visit to her. But this time he had no consciousness of them, for she looked into his eyes and it was the look for which he had prayed so often.

"My friend," she murmured, "you were right. I am weary of it all. When you came to me I was brutal. I owe you so much, and I wanted to escape the debt. I have come to pay it, if I can."

Her hands had stolen into his. It was, after all, like a dream—a beautiful dream poignant with unutterable bitterness.

"Come out with me," she murmured. "I want you to take me through the meadows and up to the hill where we watched the reapers. Will you come?"

He let fall her hands and a great sob rose to his throat.

"I cannot!" he said.

A fear stole into her eyes.

"Don't tell me that you have changed!" she pleaded.

"I have never changed," he answered, gravely; "but I am married to Mary Sheppard. It was her father's last wish, and it seemed to matter so little."

She laughed—a curious, dry, mirthless laugh.

"I hope that you will be happy," she said. "Somehow, I never thought of this. And, after all, my coming was only a whim. I must act to-night, and to-morrow night . . . and all the days of my life."

He heard the rustling of her gown as she left him. He heard the office-door swing to and close. He sat on his hard chair, and once more he looked steadily with fixed, sightless eyes into that long shaft of golden dust. Then his head sank lower and lower—into his hands. He leaned forward upon the desk. Before him stretched the long, level vista of weary days—the tread-mill of an un-lived life. Someone shouted to him from the top of the stairs. It was like the sentence of his doom—

"Stephen, are you coming up to dinner or are you not? Everything will be cold!"

He rose slowly and ascended the stairs.

THE END.



HEARD IN THE GREEN-ROOM



ALTHOUGH the tidings may seem anything but glad to our old friend the Serious Playgoer, who believes that the Drama has, or ought to have, a special "mission," it is my duty, as a theatrical chronicler, to announce that the frivolous stage-mixture known as "musical play" is about to have a new "boom" of



A PORTRAIT OF MRS. BROWN-POTTER BEFORE SHE WENT ON THE STAGE.

considerable magnitude. In proof whereof I may at first state that "My Lady Molly" is crowding Terry's with the large audiences which that theatre has so long lacked; that the Haymarket Management has just elected to preface "The Clandestine Marriage" with a musical (and, indeed, in some respects, "music-hall") sketch, called "The M.I.'s"; and that Audran's gay and go-as-you-please opera, "La Toledad," just tried at the theatre near Windsor Castle, is, at the time of going to press, enjoying its first London production at the Kennington Theatre, where the piece stays till next Saturday. Secondly, I have to notify you that Mr. Tom B. Davis and his skilful young "producer," Mr. Sydney Ellison, are, at the moment of writing, blithesomely busy preparing Messrs. Owen Hall and Sidney Jones's new musical comedy, "The Medal and the Maid," for presentation at the Lyric next Saturday night, if the recently made engagements hold good. The two scenes are laid respectively in the South of France and in Greece. One of the recent additions to the strong cast already enumerated in *The Sketch* is Mr. Tom Terriss, son of the late (and as yet un-replaced) "hero," William Terriss, and therefore brother of the charming Miss Ellaline Terriss.

To adduce further proof of the still growing "musical play" boom, I may here mention that during my travels concerning these mems., just now I found Mr. George Edwardes in the throes of rehearsal (complicated by an attack of influenza) of the new musical play, still called by the old name of "The School Girl," written by Mr. Paul Potter (plus Mr. Henry Hamilton), and composed by Mr. Leslie Stuart, for the Prince of Wales's, where it is due on May 2.

Mr. Edwardes was also (apparently by way of alternative) using up the lulls between the rehearsals of "The School Girl" by popping over to Daly's to supervise certain important stage revisions which are being made in "A Country Girl"; or by putting in a spell of work at the new play intended for the New Gaiety, after it has been tried awhile at the Old ditto—a play which, as I hinted in these columns long ago, is "All About an Orchid!"

Yet another "musical play" to add to the above group is one entitled "His Fatal Beauty," written

by Mr. Arthur Shirley, with lyrics by Mr. Walter Parke and J. P. Harrington, and music by Messrs. George Le Brunn, H. W. May, and Knight Pearce. This musical mixture, which Mr. Eugene C. Stafford will produce at the Métropole, Camberwell, next Monday (the 27th inst.), will have part of its second Act occupied by a new miniature mock-melodrama expressly written by Mr. H. Chance Newton, and entitled "The Wickedest Woman of Whatsisname; or, The Whitewashed Julia in Her Tols-toy Shop—Does Your 'Mamie' Know You're Out?—or, Planchette De Vorsay, the Fright that Failed." That, at least, is part of its title. Miss Dora Gray will enact the combination naughty heroine.

A musical piece of a higher flight is Mr. Money B. Coutts's dramatic-operatic trilogy of an Arthurian character, and respectively labelled "Merlin," "Lancelot," and "Guinevere." When I announced this work long ago, it savoured much more of the dramatic than of the operatic. Since then, however, it has been provided with much melody by Señor Albeniz, who has not been musically represented upon the London stage since Mr. Lowenfeld gave him sundry comic-opera chances some years ago.

Two more examples of impending musical plays and I have done with this theme—at all events, *pro tem*. One is M. André Messager's "Veronique," to be brought to the Coronet on May 4. The other is a somewhat strange and daring experiment—namely, a "coon comic opera," as one may call it—which, later in May, will, I am informed, be seen at the Shaftesbury. It is the work of two coloured collaborators, namely, Messrs. Paul Lawrence Dunbar and W. Marion Cook, is to be played by coloured comedians, and is entitled "In Dahomey."

Sir Henry Irving has just verified my last week's statement as to the date of his production of "Dante" at Drury Lane by choosing the 30th inst., which is to-morrow week.

Mr. Mulholland has arranged a special matinée performance at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith, to take place to-morrow, April 23, for the benefit of the West London Hospital, when, in addition to a scene from "The Toreador" by Mr. George Edwardes's Company being given, Miss Edna May, Miss Ada Reeve, Mr. Louis Bradfield, Mr. Fred Wright junior, and Mr. Tom Browne, the well-known artist, have promised to appear. The whole of the receipts (with the exception of ten per cent. to be given to the Actors' Benevolent Fund) will be handed over to the hospital, and no deduction whatever will be made for expenses.



A REMINISCENCE OF LAST YEAR'S SHAKSPEARE FESTIVAL: MR. GEORGE WEIR AS GRUMIO IN "THE TAMING OF THE SHREW."

Photographed in a garden at Stratford by Catherine Weed Ward.

KEY-NOTES

GOOD FRIDAY CONCERTS can scarcely come within the scope of ordinary criticism—they are all so very much of a religious order; but one may record that the usual number, at the usual places, were given on that day. In the afternoon, at the Queen's Hall, Madame Marie Brema sang "Eia Mater," from the "Stabat Mater," in her finely dignified and dramatic manner, giving to it just that impressiveness which is one of this singer's secrets. She also sang Kundry's declamatory song from the second Act of "Parsifal." Under Mr. Henry J. Wood's conductorship, the orchestra played, with really magnificent expression, Tschaiikowsky's Sixth Symphony, together with excerpts from "Parsifal."

In the evening, at the same Hall, a more varied concert was given. Madame Sobrino sang "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and Madame Kirkby Lunn sang "God shall wipe away all tears." Other singers who joined in the programme were Miss Florence Schmidt, Mr. Denham Price, Mr. Lawrence Rea, and Mr. Lloyd Chandos. Miss Tita Brand recited Mrs. Browning's "Mother and Poet," and Miss Matilda Verne was the solo-pianist of the evening.

At the Albert Hall, under the very able conductorship of Sir Frederick Bridge, the Royal Choral Society gave a really excellent rendering of the "Messiah." Miss Evangeline Florence sang the soprano solos very sweetly, and Miss Alice Lakin took the contralto part ably. Mr. Charles Saunders and Mr. Andrew Black both sang well, the latter in particular singing with all his customary dignity and fine vocal quality.

The Easter holidays have again brought Mr. Sousa and his band to the Queen's Hall, where they gave the first of fourteen performances a few afternoons ago. Mr. Sousa played a March entitled "Hail to the Spirit of Liberty," together with "Three Quotations" composed by himself, both given with much spirit and verve. Miss Estelle Liebling was the vocalist, and Miss Maud Powell played the solo violin to the band accompaniment.

Herr Ernst von Possart, the director of the Prinz Regenten Theater in Munich, who gave such very successful recitations here at the Queen's Hall last year, has been giving readings of two works of Wagner which are not set to music; they consisted of an imaginary work, entitled "A Pilgrimage to Beethoven," and a dramatic sketch, "Wieland der Schmied," and were delivered in a most masterly manner by Von Possart to an enthusiastic audience.

The Covent Garden Opera season draws very near, and it may, perhaps, be prophesied without any great risk of future contradiction that, apart from the Wagner Cycles, things will run pretty much in the same groove as they have done in the past. We have it on the very

best authority that there is every probability of Madame Melba appearing in the course of the season and crowning her Australian success with what it may be hoped she will turn into a London triumph. The papers have been very busy with Melba's farewell to Australia; we have had depicted most dramatic scenes of flowers showered upon the head of the fortunate prima donna, who, burying her face in the petals of fifteen-dollar roses, must have felt that this was the true sort of farewell to take of the land that had given her voice birth. A pathetic sight truly! Yet, perhaps, not without its element of humour. What one would like to find out definitely is,

how far the prima donna was taking the sea-board or how far she was treading the board of her native theatre?

Under the circumstances, either answer to such an alternative given in the affirmative would make no sort of difference to the humour of the situation; and one is quite ready to think that, whatever may be the true answer, Madame Melba is prepared to accept the true humour thereof. The solemn old Latin writer once declared, "Pulcrum est digito monstrari"; and such a pointing of fingers as Melba has recently endured may have drawn from her momentarily her sense of the comic. Still, the scene is there, and, though Dido might "want troops," Melba assuredly drew the crowds as the lodestone mountain drew the rivets from the ship of the "Arabian Nights."

It is bad hearing that Madame Emma Eames is not likely this season to make her appearance at Covent Garden. Although it cannot truly be said that Eames is a peculiarly versatile artist, there are certain parts in which she shines with quite a particular

and personal sense of characterisation. As the Countess in "Figaro"—Mozart's, of course—she has proved herself to be wonderfully dignified and wonderfully appreciative of the great music entrusted to her charge.

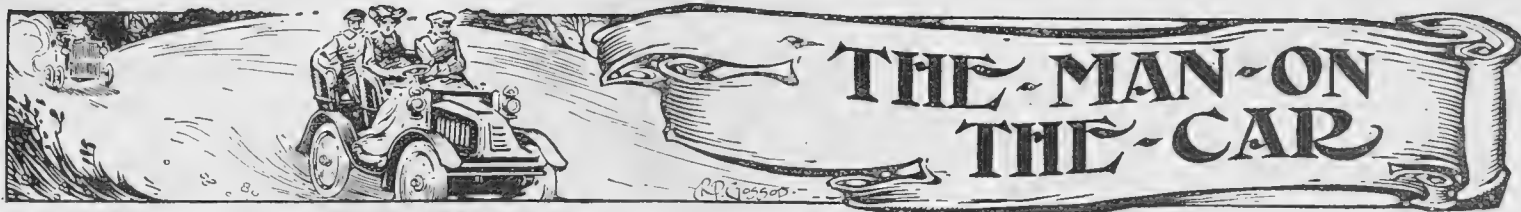
Interest is always centred in the doings of the two great living musicians whose work is generally regarded as being more effectively important than that of many another with a more daily reputation. One speaks, of course, of Herr Richard Strauss and Dr. Edward Elgar. "The Apostles" is the work upon which the last-named musician is engaged, and which is quite his own from beginning to end; that is to say, Dr. Elgar has selected his own libretto—if so ordinary a word may be used in such a connection—and it is understood that he is exerting himself to his artistic utmost to prove the faith that is in him. One looks forward to the result with the keenest expectation, and it is not likely that anybody who separates art from the "vulgarity of everyday probabilities" will fail to experience something exceptional and especial in the result. Some men you may prophesy about. Dr. Elgar is one of these.

COMMON CHORD.



MR. HERBERT FRYER, AN ENGLISH PIANIST OF GREAT PROMISE AND A TALENTED COMPOSER.

Photograph by Histed, Baker Street, W.



AN ardent automobilist, Mrs. Langtry's arrival at the Imperial Theatre in her smart car, driven by a driver in neat uniform, used to be one of the sights of the town. She is now, of course, touring in America with "The Crossways," the play in which she collaborated with Mr. Hartley Manners. "The Jersey Lily" never does anything by halves, and her motoring-costumes are as elaborate in their way as the exquisite "confections" she wears when on the stage. Her long sable cloak, with deep collar of ermine, is the envy of her lady friends, and for early spring wear she has a lovely cream-coloured cloth coat and skirt with



MRS. LANGTRY IN HER CITY AND SUBURBAN ELECTRIC LANDAU.

deep collar and cuffs of silver fox.

Mr. Charles Jarrott is well known to the world of automobilists not only as a practical motorist, but also as one of the most daring and accomplished drivers of the day. It will be remembered that a few months ago, at Welbeck, he beat Mr. Vanderbilt's best for the kilometre by covering the distance in 28½ sec., though this record has since been lowered by Mr. C. S. Rolls. Both Mr. Jarrott and Mr. Edge have recently been experimenting with the Napier cars turned out for the Gordon Bennett race, and each has expressed delight with the behaviour and speed of the British champions.



A RECORD-BREAKER: MR. CHARLES JARROTT ON HIS SEVENTY HORSE-POWER PANHARD.

Photograph by the Biograph Studio, Regent Street, W.

THE WORLD OF SPORT

The City and Suburban—Sandown—Jockeys—Racing Crowds.

NO event in the spring proves a better draw than the City and Suburban, as the Cockneys always try to find the winner at the free-and-open meeting. The race this year promises well, and there ought to be a good average field seen out. Ante-post betting is now a thing of the past, and it is practically impossible to say what will start first-favourite until the numbers appear on the board. Uninsured, one of my early fancies for the race, has been backed to win a lot of money by the 'cute Netheravon stable. It is said that Ypsilanti was started at Lincoln to get a line for Uninsured, and, as the first-named finished third to Over Norton, the stable should know the time of day. The Lincoln Handicap winner is to be ridden at Epsom by Maher, and he is sure to run well. Padlock II., who finished third at Kempton to Fighting Furley, is certain to be backed by the public, and Scullion, who was given to his present owner by Mr. Seymour, is another that will be well supported. I do not think Gascony will be quite fit, but Tar Brush, a big tip at Newmarket, has been doing the right sort of work and may go very close. I am told that Brambilla is a certainty. The French filly, who belongs to the owner of Codoman, ran well in a Nursery at Newmarket last autumn. She is said to be very smart. Smilax has been on the easy list, but Caro and Handicapper have been hustled along in their work. I shall divide my vote between Uninsured and Caro. The last-named belongs to the lucky Duke of Portland.

There will be three days' racing at Sandown Park this week. The racing on Thursday and Friday will be under Jockey Club Rules, while Saturday will be devoted to the jumping business. Red-tape is, I presume, the cause of the last day not being devoted to the so-called legitimate sport. More's the pity, as the half-holiday people get too few opportunities of seeing really good racing. If I had my way, there should be a flat-race meeting held in the London district on every Saturday during the season. It would pay well and afford good amusement to the masses. True, the "Club" people are always fond of jumping, and the ladies especially are interested in the performances of the amateurs in the saddle; but the regular racegoers do not care for steeplechasing in April. I am told that Captain White has a big chance for the Esher Stakes. Tatius, who likes the course, may win the Guildford Handicap, and Ray ought to take the Maiden Plate. The two-year-old races are best left to post-speculators. As I have said many times before, a great deal depends on the start for these races at Sandown, and seemingly it is just as easy to get off

first under the tape as it used to be when the races were started by flag. I am told, by-the-bye, that there are no end of applications for membership to the Sandown Park Club.

Several apprentices who last year were able to claim the 5 lb. allowance, and who rode with distinction, are no longer seen in the saddle in this country. Some have gone to the Continent, while others are resting. So much for the new rule that was to provide us with more good jockeys. I think the Stewards of the Jockey Club

should move in this matter, for the sake of the unprotected boys who last year brought grist to the mill of the big betting owners and others. Unfortunately, the majority of our apprentices have poor parents, and the latter are led to believe that their boys are on the royal road to fortune because they ride winners while claiming the allowance. But, hey presto! when their twelve months have expired the majority of them are sent into obscurity once more. Of course, owners and trainers are freeagents, and, indeed, they will tell you they can do as they like with their own; but the Stewards of the Jockey Club are not likely to perpetuate a system of slavery under which the slave-owners capture all the profits and fail to provide proper provision for their "slaves" after the latter have become non-profitable, so to speak. It will be necessary presently to establish races confined to apprentices who have lost their claim to the 5 lb. allowance. I confidentially commend the above suggestion to all whom it may concern.

It is now apparent that the opening-up of the new electric-tramway system will add to the crowds attending the Kempton Park

and Hurst Park Meetings. There was a record crowd at Kempton on Easter Monday, and some thousands travelled to Shepherd's Bush by "Tube" and rode in the electric-tramway cars on to Hampton Court. As I have stated before, the Hurst Park Club Syndicate comes under the new rule, and therefore cannot pay more than a ten per cent. dividend to its shareholders; but the Kempton Park Company is under no such restriction and it is allowed to distribute any amount to the holders of shares. But with the increased income there will come an addition to the responsibilities of the managers of the two Companies named. Additional police, plenty of ring-keepers, and a full supply of race-cards must be forthcoming. It is hard lines on the poorer people to attend a race-meeting and be charged a shilling for a race-card, or to find that the one thing unobtainable from the refreshment-bars is bread-and-cheese.

CAPTAIN COE.



AN EASTER SOUVENIR: OUR MR. "E. F. S." GOES A-FISHING.

From a Drawing.

OUR LADIES' PAGES.

FRENCH grammarians, when arranging their moods and tenses, ought to have made that common noun, the weather, feminine. "Souvent femme varie" was, doubtless, the crystallisation of much experience; but what about Easter in England? Did ever daughter of Eve exhibit such a propensity for quick change—all through the holiday week ardent fits of sunshine alternating with freezing showers of sleet and snow? At Bournemouth, where the quantum of sun almoned to poor Britain attains its maximum, we basked in a garden which was bathed in beams one half-hour and abandoned to whirling snow-flakes the next. To dress the part was necessarily a "model impossibility." One would have wanted blankets at ten and bandanas at twelve, so the only plan remaining was to ignore the weather and wear what one listed.

White cloth being promised us as one of the Season's landmarks, several pioneers of fashion appeared in smart frocks of the same transcendental tone. One delightful frock of oyster-white cloth, with a sun-ray skirt and Hungarian embroideries in green and mauve, made a distinctly elegant effect. White is so much helped by subtle little touches of colour. Another gown of white voile was very cleverly assisted with pipings of pale "Berkeley" yellow taffetas around the tabs of skirt and basque and bodice, while the same tone of colour appeared in a tiny cravat and showed in a whirligig of frou-frouing as the wearer carried her well-cut *trotteuse* skirt along the pathway. In contrast to this were the *svelte* though sombre draperies of Mrs. Harry McCalmont, who was staying quietly at the same hotel in company with two maids, a friend, and a purple jewel-bag. Never has a widow's bonnet been more becomingly worn. Sir Thomas Lipton paused, *en route* to *Shamrock III.*, at Bournemouth, on Easter Sunday, going off at a tangent on his motor after lunch; and other celebrities kept popping in and out like rabbits in a warren, leaving their very vocal motors outside the hotel while they lunched as if for a wager within.

I happened to hear somebody ask the hotel-keeper if motors were not a satisfactory source of income. But, after the manner of farmers and other folk, that worthy man demurred and grumbled that all they

usually left behind them was the mere equivalent of drinks and a powerful smell of paraffin. Apropos, the new pleated motor-skirts are amazingly smart and workmanlike in all the dust-coloured cloths, voiles, and coarse alpacas, which latter material is, of course, ideal



A HANDSOME GOWN OF VOILE AND LACE.

[Copyright.]



[Copyright.]

THE COMING FASHION.

for this particular use. Having done a considerable amount of "motoring" just lately, I have come to the conclusion that the hat has yet to be invented which will stand even twenty-five miles an hour. "Tell it not in Vine Street!" But a jaunty cap, of which there are many varieties, fastened with a Vickery cap-pin and tied down by well-swathed gossamer, withstands much. The wind plays havoc with cuticle, however, as well as with fringe, curls, and cap, and it greatly behoves the motor-maniac to carry her own emollient cream and soap when voyaging wildly about the world.

I find the "Erasmic" Soap balm and healing for all ills of atmosphere, and recommend it to all and sundry for habitual use who have a care of their skins. There are two sorts of soaps made by the Erasmic people, "The Peerless" and "The Elite." Both are prepared from the purest fats, and are as healing in use as they are agreeable to sight and smell; while, on the testimony of unimpeachable males, I hear the shaving-soap of the same firm is the one thing wanting to all present and future shavers. A delicious scent, called the "Erasmic Herb Bouquet," is another production of the firm, and anyone using the soap can obtain a bottle free by forwarding eighteen wrappers to the chemist or grocer from whom they were purchased.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

JUDITH (San Remo).—I agree with you that a clever maid is worth all the small dressmakers ever let loose on misguided economists. If you will give your Elise or Marie the new "Featherbone" stiffener for boning bodices, stiffening revers, supporting lace collars, and etcetera, she will find its use greatly simplify the matter of home dressmaking. It does away with wrinkles and entirely supersedes the old method of whalebone. If "Featherbone" cannot be had abroad, any draper in town will post it to you.

NANKIN (Cheltenham).—From the subject of your note, I should think "Plasmon"

is more suited to a growing girl like your daughter than half-a-dozen doctors. It is the most nourishing part of milk condensed into powder, a teaspoonful of which equals a pint of milk in nutriment. Try it, and if you are in town next week it may interest you to look in at Duke Street, Grosvenor Square, where a demonstration in the uses of "Plasmon" is given gratis daily.

FIANCÉE (Hull).—For your *corbeille*, if daintiness and fair price is a consideration, try Peter Robinson; Ernest, Regent Street, for your smart tailor-gowns; and Norman and Stacey for the furnishing of your flat. You can spend from a hundred pounds upwards on this latter, and will find everything moderately priced and of excellent design and make at the last-named firm's premises in Tottenham Court Road.

SYBIL.

THE TWO LYCEUMS.

THE new Kingsway has still a history to make, but the Strand, the Highway of the Universe, has already made it. It is the half-way road from everywhere to everywhere. It is a petrified Chronicle of England. Its palaces have vanished, but their memory survives in immortal names. Its churches only remain. Its old theatres and taverns are putting on new faces and new costumes, but its tidal wave of humanity will ebb and flow for ever.

In its long and busy life it has had two Lyceums. The first was essentially a "variety show," the second a theatre that made the drama and its exponents respected. The first was destroyed by fire, the second by Local Self-Government. In the second, Sir Henry Irving played Aristotle, and was evicted from his temple like an Irish tenant. The Lyceum No. 1, known for some time as the "English Opera House," which stood about where the present Gaiety now stands, began its career near the middle of the eighteenth century as one of those hybrid places of recreation with an educational mask, like the old Polytechnic, the Adelaide Gallery, and the Panopticon. Originally it was meant to house the germ of the Royal Academy, until a better effort was made at Somerset House in 1768. The "Rooms" were then sold to an enterprising tailor named Lingham, who let them for a kind of "dime show," as they name such places in America. Flockton, the conjurer, tried his luck, and started a marionette performance called the "Puppet Show." Charles Dibdin followed with a musical entertainment called "Sans Souci," a name he afterwards gave to his little Leicester Square theatre. Then a circus-manager named Handy, and afterwards Philip Astley, took it for equestrian performances.

The permanent "Star" of the Lyceum No. 1 was undoubtedly Miss Fanny Kelly, who lived to a very advanced age, and was a charming singer and a very effective melodramatic actress. She was a great friend of Charles and Mary Lamb, and might have been Mrs. Charles Lamb if her inclinations had led her that way.

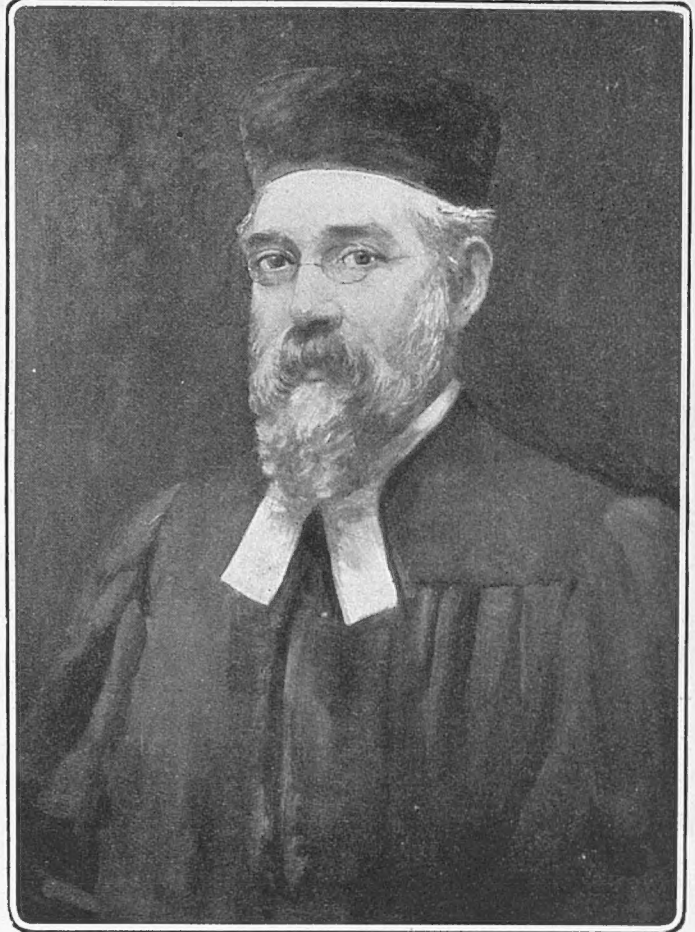
In 1818, Charles Mathews the elder, the father of "Charley," began his one-man entertainments at the Lyceum No. 1. He opened with a seven years' engagement at £1000 a-year, which was altered afterwards when he joined the regular Company. This Company comprised T. P. Cooke, Tyrone Power, Wrench, Harley, Wilkinson, the elder Emery, Madame Vestris, Miss Love, Miss Stephens, Mrs. C. Jones, Miss Chester, Miss Goward (afterwards Mrs. Keeley), the elder Mathews, and Miss Kelly. Neither Drury Lane nor Covent Garden, with all their "patent rights," could show such a Company.

In 1826, while it was occupied by a French Company (Frédéric Lemaître had played "Robert Macaire" in the same theatre), it was burnt, on Feb. 26. Much adjoining property was also destroyed. The only house saved at the Catherine Street corner of Exeter Street (south side) was the old, frowsy Fountain Tavern, afterwards bought and pulled down for the Gaiety Theatre. Mr. Arnold, the then owner, was not insured, and his loss was said to have been £80,000. This was the end of Lyceum No. 1.

Lyceum No. 2—the present or late Lyceum—was not built for four years, until the parochial plans for carrying the Waterloo Bridge

Wellington Street into Bow Street were thoroughly matured. In maturing them, they seem to have despised curves and gradients.

Lyceum No. 2 was at last opened with a triple bill, July 14, 1834. It was born with the reputation of being an unlucky theatre. Mr. Arnold was fond of trying experiments. In the summer of



[Photograph by Hollier, Kensington.]

THE REV. S. SINGER.—BY MISS FLORENCE MARKS.

This portrait is an excellent likeness of the reverend gentleman so well known to our Jewish brethren. Among the artist's important works was a portrait of the late Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, which was presented to His Majesty the King.

1835, he offered the paying public light and cooling refreshments for nothing. This anticipated Miss Litton's tea and coffee at the original Court Theatre, and went beyond the "no fee" system.

Barnett's charming opera, "The Mountain Sylph," after a trial-trip at the Grecian Saloon, in the City Road, was introduced at the New Lyceum.

The Arnolds, father and son, learned wisdom by experience. They gave up management to become landlords, and exchanged speculative business for a certainty.

Then came hand-to-mouth managements, and the boxing of the theatrical compass. A comedy, called "Lady Mary Wortley Montagu," was tried but failed. Promenade concerts, à la Musard, were introduced. Balfe, the composer, tried his hand at management, but was beaten. The Company then became a commonwealth, and soon found that acting was easier than managing. Balfe was again called in, but was no more happy in results than the commonwealth had been.

An "Independent Theatre" Company was then started within the unlucky walls. They had the valuable support of Mrs. Warner and Mr. Elton. They produced one impossible play, "Martinuzzi," without the Lord Chamberlain's corrections, and then vanished. Musard came back again. The theatre was too small, and Promenade Concerts were before their time. Then "Little Oxberry" started another co-operative combination. The result was as small as the actor (physically). Carter followed with his lions and tigers. Jullien followed Carter, and an Amateur Company followed Jullien. It was like a moving panorama.

The most brilliant managements were to come—the Keeleys and Charles Mathews, Mathews and Madame Vestris, Pyne and Harrison Opera, Edmund Falconer, the Fechter régime, the irrepressible E. T. Smith, the Brothers Mansell and Opera-bouffe, the Bateman reign, and, finally, the advent of Irving. This last short paragraphic summary would take a number of *The Sketch* to do it justice. Most of it is familiar history. Perhaps my Editor will produce a Special Lyceum Number?

JOHN HOLLINGSHEAD.



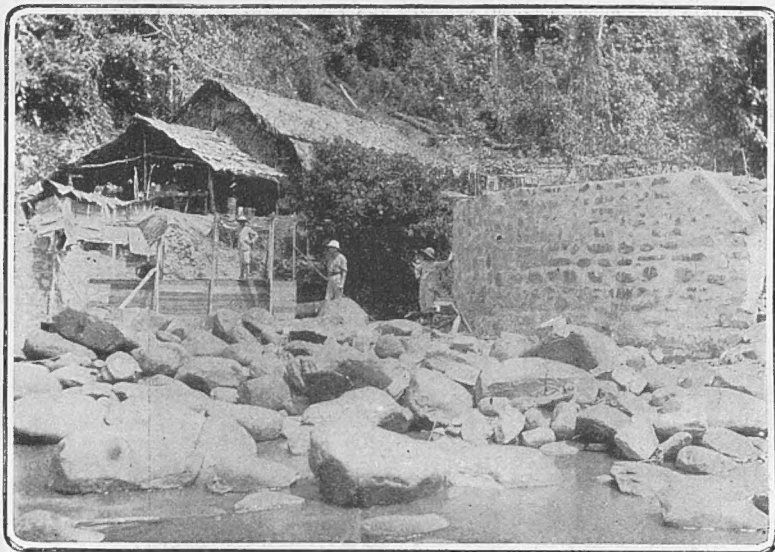
THE KAISER PASSING THE HÔTEL D'ANGLETERRE ON HIS RECENT VISIT TO COPENHAGEN.

CITY NOTES.

The Next Settlement begins on April 28.

MONEY AND THE MARKETS.

THE Bank Return did not show that much of the market debt had been paid off, and, with the contraction of the note circulation just balancing the loss of gold, the condition of the Money Market remains just what it has been for the last few weeks. After the holidays, the Stock Exchange settled down to steady business



BRIDGE-CONSTRUCTION IN BRITISH NORTH BORNEO.

in quite a hopeful frame of mind, but, what with bad news from the Balkans, the uneasiness as to the American position, and other disturbing factors, the general cheerfulness did not last long, and all the old pessimism as to Consols, the decline of national credit, &c., has very soon been revived.

The Grand Trunk meeting ought to have been reassuring to the proprietors, for Sir Charles Rivers Wilson was very frank as to the cause of the recent rise in the working expenses, which, as we have continually stated, has been caused almost entirely by the American coal-famine. As to the increase of capital, the Chairman was hardly so convincing, and we confess we do not like giving such very large borrowing powers to even the best Board of Directors. The temptation to launch out into speculative enterprises is far more difficult to resist when directors have not to face their constituents in order to provide the money necessary.

The arrangement come to between the Egyptian Government and the Nile Valley Company appears to be a very fair compromise, and we understand that a sort of informal understanding has been arrived at between the authorities and the various Companies holding concessions whereby the arrangements made up to the present time will be sanctioned, but no further subsidiaries will be allowed without the leave of the Government being first obtained. If the gold discoveries turn into well-established propositions, no objection will be made to subsequent sales; but, until Lord Cromer is satisfied that the gold-mining industry is an assured fact, a very tight hand is to be kept over the promoters' little games. This is as it should be.

SOME KAFFIR MEETINGS.

The steady increase in the monthly returns from the Transvaal are satisfactory, and point to, at least, a slight improvement in the labour conditions. By the last mail, accounts have come to hand from Johannesburg of a series of meetings at which various Rand magnates were able to express their views upon the position. It cannot be said that, taken collectively, the speeches of Mr. H. A. Rogers, Mr. Reyersbach, Mr. Fraser, and the rest, are pitched in a too hopeful strain. The labour difficulty is evidently the crux of the position, and in no case was any tangible suggestion thrown out which would bring relief within the realm of practical politics. The more the country is opened up, the more railways that are built, or improvements undertaken, the more the demand for "boys"; and, if Africa is alone to be drawn upon for labour, it must be some years before the conditions existing prior to the War can be again existent. Mr. H. A. Rogers, at the meeting of the important Ferreira Gold-mining Company, admitted the blunder that had been made in endeavouring to reduce wages as soon as the War was over, and incidentally remarked that white labour must command a minimum wage of £26 a-month, as that was the lowest amount on which a white man could live in any decency at Johannesburg.

Surely it is in the direction of cutting down the cost of necessities, and enabling a working-man to exist in reasonable comfort upon less than £300 a-year, that the problem can be most easily attacked. In Australia, at places like Coolgardie or Charters Towers, miners can live, and have money over for private speculation; upon one-half the African rate, while at Ballarat or Bendigo the white man exists in

comfort on £2 or £2 10s. a-week, and this in Colonies where Protection is the admitted fiscal policy of the Governments. If in Australia, why not in Africa?

ECHOES FROM THE HOUSE.

The Stock Exchange.

Not for all the gold of Ind would one voluntarily be a stockbroker nowadays. The House is as badly off for business as I ever remember to have seen it, and some of the younger members are beginning to ask what claim they will have on the Stock Exchange Benevolent Fund in the event of the next six months proving as listless as the half-year just closed. There is a curious air of quietude hanging over the markets, even the eternal hum dropping to a lower monotone, and appearances point to no lifting of the clouds at present. Almost the only crumb of consolation to be found is the well-established fact that appearances are deceptive. Within a few days of these lines blossoming into print we should have the Transvaal Loan upon us, and it remains to be seen whether the advent of that long-expected issue will prove a key to unlock the flood-gates of business to which the coming Loan is said to have acted as an insuperable barrier for so long a time.

Directly the Government broker turns his back upon Capel Court, Consols begin to languish and decline. So sheep-like has the market become that a few official purchases on behalf of the Government are accepted as a perfectly safe lead for speculators to follow, and the consequence is that a fresh bull account seems fairly on the way to being established. This, on top of the already existent position that has been open for the rise since the pre-Peace days of last June, simply adds a new load to the overweighted market, and, although these are early days in which to discuss the prospects of the May Consol account, it may be very much doubted whether the contango will rule a bit easier than it has done for the past few months. It is all very well to assign the Servian trouble as the latest reason for the renewed dullness of the Funds: one might, with just as much wisdom, lay the charge to the door of Sir Edgar Vincent, for his somewhat fractious letter to the *Times*, the contents of which, by the way, might form excellent subject-matter for one of the questions in the next score of conundrums set by Printing House Square to those who are bold enough to enter for its competition. The real reasons for the fall in Goschens are more in number than the months of the year, and they have been dealt with in detail so often of late, both in these columns and those of almost every journal that touches finance, as to make re-covering of the ground a work of supererogation. The market must be taken as we find it, and that means the bull account is seen joining hands with the reduction in interest as a dual means for causing perturbation to speculator and investor respectively. The latter finds himself faced with $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest, less income-tax, say, prematurely, at a shilling in the pound—a net yield of $2\frac{1}{8}$ per cent. This, too, is the rate received by the speculator who has to pay nearly double as much for the privilege of carrying over the stock, and thus adding a matter of some $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. to the cost of his stock every time he does it. There is nothing to relieve the bareness of the situation—not even a Kaffir boomlet, with its invariable concomitant of Consol sales by those who consider this the most prudent, if unpatriotic, sort of bear hedge. There are no purchases being made on behalf of the money-lending institutions; it is much more profitable to lend money on Consols at 4 to $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. than it is to buy the stock outright and run the risk of the price declining, while the interest comes to a mere $2\frac{3}{8}$ per cent. on the nominal value. Certainly the Budget bulks ahead, with vague uncertainty attendant upon what it may reveal; but, taking all things into account, a great deal of difficulty lies in the path of him who would pierce the immediate future of Goschens, and it is by no means surprising—in fact, it is quite natural—that the course of Consols should continue for a while as inconstant as that of any speculative counter to be found in the Stock Exchange.

Coming down on the "Twopenny Tube" the other day, a working-man congratulated his wife upon there being only two classes on the line. "Watchyer mean?" asked the good lady. "There's only *one* class, ain't there?" The lord and master gently removed this erroneous impression by the remark, "If you've got tuppence you kin 'ave a ride: if you ain't got tuppence you can't. 'Ow's that?" Woman-like, she sniffed contemptuously, and the other passengers smiled as happily as the stockholders are doing at the rise which is putting up the price of the Ordinary stock. This improvement is, of course, due in no small part to the wonderful success that is falling to the London United Tramways Company with its Hampton Court extension, and, looking ahead, the canny investor might well devote some little attention to District stock or Metropolitan Consolidated. At present, the crowds go down to Shepherd's Bush by the Central London, and thence to Kew or Hampton Court by tram; but when the Metropolitan and the District lines are electrified, the rush will be equally great for Hammersmith as it now is for Shepherd's Bush. As an investment, Metropolitan Consolidated is well worth putting away, and Districts have all the elements of a five-point rise in them if the holder is content to wait for it. I cannot, for the life of me, make out what possesses the Central London directors to toy with the need for ventilation reform in the "Tube," because, when the other lines open, with their better atmosphere and less stuffy conditions, they are bound to capture a large part of the traffic which the older concern could easily retain by studying now the comfort of its passengers.

Home Rails, as a whole, ought to go better, like a good many other things round the House, but it is very difficult to see where the rise can come from unless money rates should decline. A good many of us are thinking that the Old Lady of



BRITISH NORTH BORNEO: ON THE PADAS RIVER.

Threadneedle Street will lower her 4 per cent. Bank Rate as a contribution to the success of the new loan. Should this be done, there would come about a decided rally in the investment markets, and the "Heavy" stocks are not likely to be left behind in such a movement. Speaking of investment stocks, the amalgamation of Asphalt undertakings should draw attention to the capital channels for cash which the Preference shares of the best Asphalt Companies are. The Neuchatel 5 per cent. Preferences, for instance, can be bought at about 10½ for the £10 shares fully paid, and the dividend falls due at the end of June, so that the price carries about 1½ per cent. of interest in its current quotation. Old ladies can sleep on Asphalt Preferences as comfortably as upon the downiest feather-bed.

Mining shares are almost too dead a letter to write about, and it is all but impossible to see one's way in the Kaffir Circus. Already the eyes of shareholders are turned with some wistfulness to the Asiatic labour which is supposed to supply the magical talisman that alone can remedy the market's evils. As I have said all along, I am sure this detested, and perhaps detestable, expedient will have to be resorted to in the long run, for the big houses are stronger than the Government and hold the situation in the hollow of their horny hands. With which dainty effort of alliteration, dear reader, a graceful bow shall rid you for the time being of

THE HOUSE HAUNTER.

ARGENTINE AFFAIRS.

Seeing that the Argentine Bond and Railway Markets are two of the very few departments in the Stock Exchange which show any degree of strength in these dull days, it is at least fair to suppose that, should business re-awaken in other sections of the Stock Exchange, these securities will bulk largely in the front rank of popular favourites. In the City pages of *The Sketch* both Argentine Bonds and Argentine Railway stocks have been consistently recommended as good speculative investments for some time past, and we may, perhaps, be pardoned for expressing a hope that our readers profited by the suggestions which have been thrown out in reference to Buenos Ayres and Rosario Railway stock. In spite of the rise which has taken place in "Roseys," as the market calls them, there is every prospect of a further enhancement of value, and we do not think that 85 will suffice to stop the improvement. A year ago the price was fully 25 points lower than it is now, and it may be urged that such a rise has thoroughly discounted all immediate prospects. To which we would reply that, notwithstanding such an excellent argument, our view remains that the price will touch at least 85 before long. Although the Argentine Government Bond market has made slower progress than that of the Railway section during the past twelve months, the principal bonds stand much higher now than they did in April 1902, and the country is in a state of prosperity which only needs a little more public attention for the bonds to be eagerly sought after by those who are willing to accept some risk for the sake of 5 or 6 per cent. The latter rate can be obtained from Argentine Funding Bonds, while the 1886 issue returns a fraction over five. To the merits of the Rescission Bonds reference has frequently been made, and the price now stands some 14 points above that which ruled a year back. That it will go to 80 in course of time there can be no reasonable doubt, and our favourable opinion as to its prospects remains unchanged, in spite of the improvement which has taken place in the price.

JAMES NELSON AND SONS.

Considerable public interest attaches to the coming meeting of the James Nelson Company in view of the prophecy so generally made that the Company will be unable to maintain its 50 per cent. dividend for the future. Within the next week or so there will be distributed a dividend of seven shillings a-share on the Ordinary and about sixpence a-share less on the Second Preference, so that, at the current price of 3½ and 2½ respectively, the percentage is, of course, magnificent; but since the European ports have been re-opened to the importation of Argentine cattle, to say nothing of the tremendous amount of new competition that has sprung up, it may well be doubted whether the past rate of profit can be maintained, and, in view of this possibility, Nelsons have been severely banged of late by, it is said, a certain group who are largely interested in the shares of competing Companies. While it is exceedingly difficult to form any opinion in advance of the meeting, we have no hesitation in saying that the Second Preference are a good speculation at the present price, in which is, of course, included the dividend. As there are only fifty thousand of these shares, it is obvious that the price is peculiarly liable to be knocked about by those who are anxious to depreciate the Company or to attain other ends of their own. But, even supposing that the dividend of 47 per cent. paid for the past year should be reduced to 23½, the yield would work out to 18 per cent. on the money. With regard to the Ordinary shares, of which there are three hundred thousand, they have now become a highly speculative holding, and it is tolerably certain that they will not get another 50 per cent. dividend, at all events for some time to come. Their supporters, however, are loud in the assertion that the price will go to 4, but we should be rather inclined to fight shy of these shares and to put our faith and our money into the Second Preference rather than the Ordinary.

Saturday, April 18, 1903.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Only letters on financial subjects to be addressed to the "City Editor, *The Sketch* Office, 198, Strand."

Our Correspondence Rules are published on the first Wednesday in each Month.

F. H. K.—Have nothing to do with the Corporation. If you wish to buy Lottery Bonds, we advise you to deal with Messrs. N. Keizer and Co., of 29, Threadneedle Street, E.C. They will deal at close market prices, and, if you ask them, keep you posted as to drawings.

ROGER.—(1) The Corporation Loans are perfectly safe. (2) Any of the following will give you 4 per cent. or over with safety: Canada 4 per cent. Registered stock

99-102, Queensland Investment Company 4 per cent. Debenture stock 87-91, Imperial Tobacco Pref. shares 1½-1, or you might get 5 per cent. from City of Mexico Bonds, Japanese Bonds, or Argentine Rescission Bonds without undue risk.

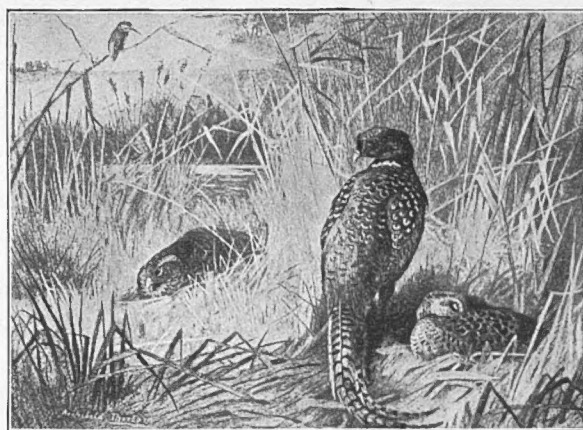
A. G. C.—We have sent you the names and addresses of two firms of brokers who are members of the Stock Exchange and will do your business honestly. You will have to give either of them a banker's reference, or a deposit by way of cover.

AMY.—Have nothing to do with any tout who sends you circulars of infallible systems for making money by means of blind pools or other like swindles.

R. L.—We do not think there is even an outside chance of a dividend in either of the concerns mentioned by you. They are mere gambling counters puffed by various touts. As to the mines, at present price we prefer New Goch, Heriot, or Wolluter to your selections, but it is a mere matter of opinion. Practically, you cannot sell the Bank shares.

CAUTION.—All your list are quite gilt-edged securities and safe. How you propose to split £400 among so many concerns we do not know. In our opinion, you might get 5 per cent. with all reasonable safety by putting £100 in each of the following: (1) City of Mexico bonds, (2) *Lady's Pictorial* Pref. shares, (3) Inter-oceanic of Mexico Railway Prior Lien bonds, (4) Buenos Ayres Western Ordinary stock or Argentine Rescission bonds. See also "The House Haunter's" Stock Exchange letter.

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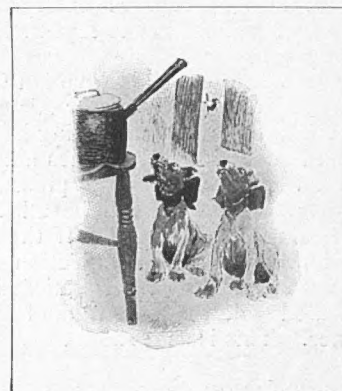
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